

CANAWAY  
AND THE  
LUSTIGS



JOSEPH LEISER.

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CANAWAY AND THE LUSTIGS









### THE SEDER

*The Priest dropped his head and murmured a low assent.*

# CANAWAY AND THE LUSTIGS

BY  
JOSEPH LEISER



CINCINNATI  
YOUNG ISRAEL  
PUBLISHER



**SRL**  
URL

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## **CANAWAY AND THE LUSTIGS**

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**TO MY PARENTS**

**J. L.**





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# Canaway and the Lustigs

## CHAPTER I.

### THE LUSTIGS IN CANAWAY

THERE used to be over the entrance and along the upper line of the store windows of a two-story brick building on Main Street of Canaway, a large gilt and black sign, the bright, glistening letters standing out distinctly against a background of black. The words read:

### ROCHESTER CLOTHING STORE.

This building, not an imposing structure by any means, or a thing of beauty, is still standing, and may be seen on any day in the year by one who chances to be in this Western New York town. But the sign has changed, and the interior of the store has been greatly enlarged and improved, since the owner and proprietor, with whom we are especially concerned, carried on business there.

At the time of which I write, the store was long and narrow. It still conforms in the main to these dimensions. But it has been so lengthened that one scarcely notices its width. In former days it was about one-half of its present depth and the rear end was as dark as a cellar.

In those days the store was packed with clothing. On both

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side walls stood tiers of shelves reaching from the floor to the ceiling, and in the middle of the floor ran a succession of tables. There also were counters that stood a few feet away from the shelves. These and the center tables made four little aisles up and down which the proprietor passed as he waited on his customers.

On the right and left of the entrance were small show-cases resting on the counters. The modern show-case, which is made wholly of glass, was unknown in those days. The type of show-case used in the Rochester Clothing Store may still be found in the confectionery stores of country towns. It is about six feet long, three feet wide and one foot high. Candy dealers in country towns find it necessary to confine their sweets within this limited enclosure to keep out the flies and sundry small fingers. But these show-cases are no longer used in large cities, where merchants are eager to display their wares.

In the Rochester Clothing Store of Canaway there were few fixtures. Over the counter, on a home-made wooden frame, some wires were strung, the whole device being suspended from the ceiling. On these wires were pinned red bandanna handkerchiefs, suspenders (called by the country people "galluses"), and socks, usually of two colors—a bright red and a light gray. The socks were not of a pretty design, like those worn by the present generation. They were thick and as hard as cardboard, but kept the feet warm, and for that reason men bought them.

Directly opposite this rack and over the counter to the right of the entrance, hung another rack, on which in winter a variety of hats, chiefly felt hats or woolen caps, were displayed. In summer all this cloth headgear was removed, and a goodly assortment of straw hats hung from the rack, being mostly wide-brimmed for the farmers, and more especially for the farmers' sons, who prided themselves more on possessing a broad-brimmed straw hat for the

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haymaking season than the city boys do on owning a bicycle.

On the tables, counters, and shelves, each kind in its place, were coats, trousers, vests, overcoats, overalls, shirts, underwear, neckties, paper collars, and linen dusters, which were made popular by Horace Greeley, who, it is said, never wore any other kind of coat when he could help it.

This was a country clothing store; and the goods offered for sale were the sort most needed by the farmers and country people. The material was good and strong, but not strictly fashionable. It was worn for use and not for show. This is the general appearance of the place, except in winter time, when, by removing one of the center tables, a space was cleared for a large cylinder-shaped sheet-iron stove, around which a half-dozen tottering chairs were set. These chairs were like war veterans—one wanted an arm, another leg. Not one was sound of limb or unbandaged. All were bound in place with twine—a decrepit lot of props for a parlor, but very comfortable seats for a clothing store in winter, when the north wind blew and the stove, roaring back defiance, threw out warmth and cheer to those encircling it.

Were one to enter this store, he would be met by a man of average height, who would advance slowly from whatever part of the room he happened to be, and grasp the newcomer by the hand cordially, and begin to talk at once about the weather, the last runaway in the village, and end up his inquiries by asking, with apparent deep concern, all about your family, your wife and children, your father, mother, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Being usually in his shirt sleeves, both in summer and in winter, he appeared to be inclined to obesity, and so he was. His arms were short and fat, and his shoulders wide apart, giving ample space for the setting of his large, round head, which was covered with a heavy growth of brown, curly hair. His neck—and that was the one feature of the man to be remembered—he had no

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neck. It was so short that his head appeared to rest level with his shoulders. At times one might think he was deformed; but not so; he was simply short, and not a stiff-necked nor obstinate man. His eyes, which were dark blue, always sparkled with good cheer. The color of his skin was ruddy, in spite of his indoor habits. There was not a frown or a wrinkle on his low but wide forehead, nor a furrow on his cheeks. Honesty and friendliness were written over his open face. Light and happiness shone from his eyes.

This was Herman Lustig.

The people of Canaway and the farmers of Ontario County considered Herman Lustig a prudent, trustworthy business man. When he said the cloth of a coat was "all wool," his customers believed him, because he never hesitated to inform a customer, if he knew it was so, that a coat was not all wool. It became a proverb among the country folks that whatever "Dutch Herman" said was true. And Dutch Herman is what they called him. In other words, Herman Lustig was honest in his dealings and public-spirited when necessary. But he attended strictly to his own business, and allowed others to do the same with theirs. So he prospered, as all do who adhere to this policy.

But were he simply an honest clothing merchant, and nothing more, I would have no occasion to introduce him here. He was more than a clothing merchant, as we shall have opportunity to learn before long.

Our interest in Herman Lustig arises from two facts: First, he was the father of two boys, Ludwig, the older, and Gottlieb; and secondly, Herman Lustig had many stories to tell his sons about places he had seen and men he had known—men, the like of whom live only in the provincial towns of Germany. And Lustig was born and brought up in one of them, and had many experiences there, which are not the lot of boys of our day and country.



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We are tempted to say that Herman Lustig and his sons are of special interest to us because they lived in Canaway. To be born or to live in Canaway is a rare good fortune to any one. And since our stories are all located in this place (those who hear them and he who tells them lived there), suppose we learn something about Canaway.

Bear in mind that Canaway is not a manufacturing town. Only two things are made there—ale and bricks, two articles that do not always go together. There used to be a spoke factory just outside the jail limits, but the only fact of interest about the spoke factory was that occasionally it burned.

Canaway is not a place of mills and factories. It is simply a Western New York village, situated at the foot of Canaway Lake, on the banks of which grow the most deliciously flavored grapes raised in North America. Canaway Lake gives the town of Canaway its distinction. Without the lake, the town would be a bride without a bridegroom. The two are inseparable.

Now, it must be remembered that the Lustigs did not make Canaway famous, although certain great men make their places of residences well known. "Let a man do a great deed," says Emerson, "or think a great thought, and even if he lives in a forest, men will come to see him." But the chief interest we have in presenting Herman Lustig and his sons is due to the fact that they and their mother were the only Jewish people in Canaway.

A few such people live in country towns, and to distinguish them from all other kinds and classes of Jews, they are called country Jews. For this reason their relatives and friends who live in cities commiserate them. But there is no need to do that, even if the only Jewish family dwelling in a country town enlarges the Jewish population by bringing a mother-in-law, a cousin, or a step-brother, or a sweetheart to live with them in that place.

Country boys have a better time during their childhood and

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youth than city boys do, and so do girls, for that matter—at least, so the country boys think, and they ought to know. A majority of Jewish children in this and other countries are born and brought up in cities. They know very little of the country, and see less of it than is good for them. That they have to forego many pleasures is not realized until, perhaps, they make a visit to some country home. But they have by that time lost freedom and lightness of limb and cannot run, jump nor climb. They do not know the birds and their habits, nor the names of the trees and their customs. And, to be sure, birds and trees and insects, as well as grown-up folks, have their habits and customs. Men have written books telling us about the doings of bees and wasps, and other insects too numerous to mention. And then the city-bred cannot read weather signs in the skies, or point out a thunder-head, should one loom up before them.

City boys and girls never walk far at a time. Whenever it is necessary for them to go a distance, they take a street car. But who can find a bird's nest while riding on a street car? or see a squirrel run along a fence rail? City boys miss half the joy of life because they live in steam-heated flats. But they never find that out till they have grown old, when their zest for out-of-door things is lost.

Country boys and girls play real live games without the interference of the policeman. There are no policemen in country towns. The town constable, the only similar official to a policeman, is usually an old man, and possibly a veteran, elected to sit in the court house and tell war stories over and over again to the old cronies and whoever will listen. He rarely arrests anyone, for fear the culprit might happen to be an old soldier; and to imprison such a man is against the rules of the jail.

A city boy learns to swim in a natatorium, if he learns at all, and usually the only bath he gets is in a bath-tub. But a country

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boy has an old swimming hole, somewhere in the creek, behind the willows, far enough away from the watchful eyes of his parents to be out of sight. There he learns how to swim, watching the older boys, who act as teachers. They teach him thoroughly. First they throw him in and compel the novice to sink or swim. He never sinks, to be sure, but he cries out in fright. He is then promptly ducked the second time, to show him that he must respect his elders and not say anything babyish or unmanly.

So he learns to swim the first day he touches fresh water. Diving and the other amphibian tricks of his instructors are later accomplishments. The boy who can dive "head first"—that is the only proper way to dive—is a candidate for the circus. All country boys are candidates for the circus.

There are many other games and sports a country boy plays that are unknown in cities. "Hunt the grey," for example—a game that starts early in the evening and lasts till the boys are tired out. Some boy takes a club and throws it down the street. The first one who gets it throws it further on, running all the while and throwing it forward, till they reach the town limit. Then at the first cross-road the boys begin to encircle the town. He who is so ill-fated as to be chosen to find the stick or club is compelled to run after his comrades, hunting the grey, as the club is called. The only clue he has to the location of the stick is the distant cry of his comrades, who, from time to time, shout out, "Hunt the grey! hunt the grey!" On still nights the echoes of their cries float over the village like the low, mournful sob of a wayfarer in distress.

There is another game, less tiresome but more likely to cause accident, known by the unpoetic name of "shinny." Indeed, the game is well named. It is a shin-breaking game for those who may be careless at it. This is how the boys of Canaway used to play the game: A small block or cube of pine or hickory—the

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latter preferred because of its hardness—was set on a flat rock, equidistant from two goals. Two competent leaders, each holding firmly a long stick curved at the end (the stick was a young sapling that ended in a knee or knot), would strike the small block (with the stick) from the plate towards his own goal at a given signal. The cube would then be knocked about by several contestants on the respective sides—the point of the game being to knock the block across the opponent's goal line. That done, a victory was scored. The boys would play three, possibly five games, and then disband either to eat apples or to crack hickory nuts, the victors, to be sure, passing uncomplimentary remarks on the shabby playing of their opponents.

The game, it is readily seen, is a crude form of our modern polo, or the still more modern and aristocratic golf; but "shinny" is not so expensive. Golf is the luxury of the rich, who have enclosed parks and extensive lawns and club-houses, with servants, keepers and the like. But "shinny" any country boy may play, and be his own caddy.

This little description of country sports has no direct bearing on the Lustigs or Canaway. But then we are dealing with country children, and it is well to know the superior way in which they amuse themselves. And since the residents of the cities are in the habit of looking down pitifully, if not contemptuously, on country people, it is time to remind the city dwellers that, so far as the children are concerned, they had better have been born in the country, because of the greater pleasures country children enjoy.

Besides, every country boy has pet animals. His pet is usually a dog. Few dogs are allowed in the city flats—certainly not a horse. Those who keep horses give over the care of their horses to a coachman, and the boys seldom see them, because they ride in closed carriages, as if they were always being driven to a funeral.

But if a country boy keeps a dog or a horse, he is certain to

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keep chickens, and city people see chickens only inside of butcher shops. A boy or girl who has never seen or heard a rooster crow when the first beam of dawn gilds the rim of the east, does not know how this fearless trumpeter drives solitude away from the country side. Then to witness two young roosters fight for supremacy is to see a serio-comedy of poultry life.

The fun of making things—what can city boys make? Some of them do not know what a hammer looks like. Have they ever built a dog house or a chicken coop? Do they know how to put up a hut in the woods in which to hide from the Indians who still roam a forest in a boy's imagination? Have any city boys built a dove-cote or made a tent out of old burlap bags? Have they gone berrying along country roads, or picked cherries on shares from Mrs. Blodgett's cherry tree, as the boys in Canaway did? They have not.

Have city boys gotten up early mornings to see a circus come to town, and carried water for the elephants for an admission ticket to the side-show? Oh, no. A city boy does not know what mysterious freaks are to be found in a side show. The man with rubber skin; the armless man, who can write his name with his toes; the Albino lady, whose eyes are pink; the midget and the giant; the fat women and the living skeleton; the glass blower from Ballyhoo, and the snake charmer from Hindoostan—are not these curious more bewildering than the circus itself, with Jumbo, the big elephant, and the other wild animals? A country boy thinks so.

A circus is an important affair to a country boy, because every circus has a clown. The boys follow after him in the parade farther than they do the steam calliope—and it is not every circus that can afford a steam calliope. But every circus has a clown. He always rides along in a parade, drawn by an old mule that kicks every time it passes a hitching post. Every time the hind legs

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of the mule go up in the air, the clown jumps up from his seat; and that makes the boys laugh.

What country boy has not followed the clown (of course every one could not get away from his parents to follow) but those who marched behind him up and down the street watched eagerly his grimaces; laughed when he laughed; talked to him as if he were the only being in the world worth noticing.

I will never get through talking about the country if I keep on at this rate. But let it be understood now, that Ludwig and Gottlieb never regretted that they were born in Canaway, for although they occasionally visited Rochester, the biggest city in the world to them, and saw a real fire engine there, and a patrol wagon and policeman, and big stores with more goods in one corner than their father had in his entire store, and more people on one street than in Canaway on a fireman's parade or circus day, still they never regretted their childhood in Canaway. There was no occasion for them to regret the many times they went barefoot. There was no need for them to recall with a shiver the day they fell in the brook when the ice broke upon the creek. Was there any disgrace in picking up bones and selling them to Mr. Cornell, the phosphate man, to buy firecrackers with on the Fourth of July? Not at all. All this was boys' fun. All the boys in Canaway did something like this. Many of them flew kites with Ludwig and Gottlieb in Blanchard's pasture lot. Many a time a dozen or more boys would help Mr. Mutchler drive the cattle which he bought at the Buffalo Stock Yards from the freight cars to his abattoir on the Poor House road. There were a thousand and one things Ludwig and Gottlieb never forgot or felt sorry that they had seen and done.

On the contrary, Ludwig and Gottlieb remembered their experiences in Canaway all their lives, and perhaps this day they are telling a younger generation, born in the city, of what country boys in America used to do, just as their own father told them of

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his life in Schwersenz. And because all these things happened and were true, I am telling them.

Ludwig and Gottlieb were not very old when their father made known to them that they were Jewish children. In fact, they were the only Jewish people in Canaway. But nobody paid any attention to that matter. The boys played together—the Mutchler boys, Will Andrews, Charles Ashley, Charles Kleinle, Art Ellis, Speedie Blanchard, Pat Meade's boys—all the boys on Bristol Street, Clark and Coy streets, say nothing of Main, as if Ludwig and Gottlieb were no different from the other children. Nobody called them names; nobody referred to their religion; and nobody knew that they were Jews except for the fact that Mrs. Rosalia Lustig usually sent Matzoth in Passover week around to all her neighbors. But then the Lustigs called them crackers, and that is all they thought about it.

But in their own household Herman Lustig and his wife tried to preserve a few Jewish practices. On Friday evening extra candles were lighted, and on Saturdays the boys were not allowed to dig a cave or build a hen house. At first they did not understand the reason for this rule; but Herman Lustig made it very clear by saying that Saturday is the Jewish Sabbath, and no hard work must be done on that day.

During the week days the boys ran in and out of their father's store. On Saturday afternoon, and during summer months on Saturday evening, they were permitted to stay in the store.

This was always a rare treat. On Saturdays the farmers came to town. At every hitching post along either side of the main street stood a horse and a wagon. The farmers who stepped into the store always talked to the boys and invited them to come out to their farms, and especially to see a young colt or a flock of young ducks or geese or turkeys. The town was a-hum on Saturday. Every Saturday there seemed to be a runaway to furnish excitement

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for the rest of the week. Every Saturday something happened—somebody was lost in the great crowds that flocked into town, either a baby or a wife or a husband; something occurred that did not happen week days, and so made the town lively.

Busy as Canaway was on Saturday, it was at its quietest on Sunday. Early Sunday morning the church bells rang, sending their tones over the hills and far away. The Baptist Church on Main Street started the music. Up Main Street the sounds hastened, carrying along with them in their train the tones of the Congregational and Presbyterian bells, quickly answered by the Methodist bell, and far out on Upper Main Street by the Episcopal chapel's, whose sweet, tinkling tones ended the strain. As soon as the bells rang, the procession of church-goers began. From almost every house along Bristol and the other streets some one came forth attired in his best clothes.

It was natural that Ludwig and Gottlieb, who witnessed this scene every Sunday morning, should have their curiosity aroused. And it was.

"Why don't we go to church, papa?" Ludwig asked his father one Sunday morning, as he saw the Stuart children step out of the house, directly opposite their own home, and follow close behind their parents on their way to the Congregational Church.

"Our temple is at Rochester. We have no church. We go to a synagogue," answered the father.

And with this statement of the bare fact, began a recital of the history of the Jewish people as Lustig knew it. But it was, in truth, simply the briefest outline of early Biblical times, including the stories of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David and King Solomon. Much of what he told his sons, he had heard in his own father's house in Schwersenz. Some of it, too, he had picked up in Cheder, which he had attended. Brief as it all was, it was sufficient to



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interest the boys and evoke Lustig this wise saying as he concluded the story:

"You see, boys, we Jews try to do the fair and square thing. We try to take care of people when they need help. We study and are instructed to make a good living. Every man should be able to work. Whatsoever a man can do, he should do with all his might."

But it is not my plan to now tell what the Lustigs did, as in later chapters you will hear how they kept Purim, Pesach and other holidays. To tell all about it would be like picking out all the raisins from a pudding. It is best for us to know something about the Lustigs and their life in Canaway before we know what they did. You will find that out soon.

Sunday, however, was the happiest day in the week for the boys, even if it was the quietest for the village.

On Sunday Herman Lustig stayed home, and, whenever the weather permitted, he would take a long walk in the afternoon with his boys. At times a carriage would be hired and then Mrs. Lustig would join them for a carriage ride. Usually, however, she would remain at home, and Mr. Lustig and the boys would then stroll about the village.

Early Sunday morning, after breakfast, Herman Lustig would take his boys out in the garden. There were a number of "odd jobs," as Lustig called them, awaiting his attention, and in attending to them, with the aid of his two sons, the morning was soon gone.

On Sunday afternoon, in spring and autumn, and sometimes even in winter, they took their long walks. Not a corner in the village nor in the country immediately surrounding Canaway did they fail to visit. There was the brewery on Upper Main Street; the Sanitarium at the farther end of Bristol Street; the fire engine house on Mechanics Street; the brick yard out on Saltanstill Street;

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the County Jail on Jail Street; the MacKechnie residence; the Granger Place; the old Academy—one of the earliest classical schools in Western New York, which Stephen A. Douglas, Abraham Lincoln's great rival attended; there was the Resser Stock Farm, which was for Lustig a very important spot, as you will hear before this chapter closes; and, of course, there were the Fair Grounds. Every county seat (and Canaway is the county seat of Ontario County) has a court-house, a jail, a town pump and a fair ground. For what are county seats unless they have all these places and buildings?

Lustig had a dozen and one things to tell the boys about the various places they looked at—how, for example, the locomotives on the old Peanut Road (the Batavia-Canaway division of the New York Central) go to sleep in the round house; how bricks are made of clay and sand; how ale is brewed from hops and barley at the brewery; how poor men, after they become rich, build larger houses than they need and live long enough to regret it, as was the case with the MacKechnie residence on Upper Main Street, which was built far away from other peoples' houses so as to make townsmen believe rich people were better than other people.

But the boys could see some things without being shown; and one thing there was which required no explanation and was a joy in itself—a boat ride on Canaway Lake.

Quite often on Sunday afternoons, in summer, when the weather permitted, Lustig hired a boat of old Mrs. McCormack and rowed his boys on the lake or over to the "island." This was not a fictitious or imaginary spot—it was not a fairyland; but it seemed like one—standing out a mile or more from the shore. Clumps of tall walnut trees and many bushes grew there; all said to have been planted by the Indians, who at one time held a war council on the island, so the boys believed.

Many legends were associated with the spot. The boys

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knew them, and frequently visited the island. There was a sand bar reaching from it to the main land, and along this sand bar the boys frequently "treaded." That was done in this way:

Stripping and holding their clothes over their heads, they waded up to their necks, "treading" the water as they went to and fro along the bar. He who was able to do this in safety—that is, without wetting his clothes—was considered an expert swimmer.

The boys claimed there was a hole on the west side of the island which reached down to China. All the boys in Canaway knew that if one digs a hole in the ground and keeps on digging, he will some day reach China. And this hole on the back of the island reached down to China, because no one had ever touched bottom in that spot. Some say an octopus—the boys called it a devil-fish—lived in that hole, and was alive, ready to entangle a victim in its coils. So no one but Nick Carter ever swam there or even went near it, and he never did it a second time.

One day Nick Carter "stumped" (which is the Canaway word for challenged) the rest of the crowd to dive in the hole. No one accepted his challenge. And to show his comrades that he was not afraid of any devil-fish, Nick prepared to dive there himself. The boys looked on in awe; he dove down. The boys held their breath in suspense. Soon he bobbed up shouting and howling like an Indian on the war-path. The devil-fish had tried to get him. He could swear to that. His foot had been grasped by the fish. He said so, and who was there to deny it?

Some man afterwards discovered that it was a branch of an old tree decayed and water-logged—dangerous enough to swimmers. But Nick swore it was a devil-fish, and the boys accepted the story. Later he joined a circus, because he could do any tricks. But no boy ever went near that hole which reached down to China—no, sir!

There is no prettier lake in the Empire State than Canaway.

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It is large enough for steamboats to navigate; and in the days of the Lustigs two side or paddle wheel steamers, the Canaway and the Ontario, plied to and fro from the "head to the foot of the lake" as the people of Canaway say; that is, from Woodville, the most northerly, to the southernmost point of the lake, a distance of sixteen miles. Both shores were dotted here and there with small summer resorts, the most famous ones being at Seneca Point, Miller's on the west shore, and Gates' and Willow Grove, on the eastern shore.

Sometimes the German societies of Rochester, the Maennerchor and Turnverein, had an excursion to some resort bordering on the lake. Whenever one of these occurred, Lustig would close his store, and, with his family, join his compatriots in a day's outing. But this did not happen every year.

The foot of the lake is lined by a wide margin of swamps, where the cat tails and weeds grow rank and tall, and, in certain spots, water lilies, white and yellow ones, as the boys who own a homemade, flat-bottom boat know full well. Wherever these swamps have been drained, there is a rich, deep black muck, on which immense quantities of onions are raised and shipped to such far-away places as La Fayette, Indiana, and Topeka, Kansas.

The north shore is crescent-shaped, but from this broad base, as it were, the lake stretched between ever-rising hills, until at Miller's it is virtually embanked by wooded slopes, the banks standing up straight as a wall.

Rowing out from the quay at Mrs. McCormack's boat-house, one is enabled to obtain a view of the entire region, for the land slopes north and northwestward till it touches the sky; and over this vast region is spread a magnificent panoramic view of farms, orchards and vineyards.

The town of Canaway itself, with the dome of its court house and its many church spires, appears to rise out of space. Far to

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the west, and gradually melting into the sky, slope the fields of grain and pastures, dotted with remnants of the original forest. To the west and north and eastward, the land slants upward, as if it were an immense fan, on which some great painter had drawn a vast picture of rural life, and had placed in the center of the picture a country village with its long, arborescent streets reaching from the lake to the upper crest of the hills, and being interlaced and cut across by side streets stretching from field to field—from east to west. At sunset the glow of the sun lights up this curved rim of the landscape with sheets of red and gold; while from the east and southeast, over the bluffs, piled one against the other, recalling fanciful images of some Alpine region, come darksome shadows purpling the encircling hills which rise up against the horizon.

Canaway and Canaway Lake have had their poet. Many years ago the following verses appeared in the Ontario County Messenger.

Lustig used to sing them to his sons by adapting them to a tune made familiar in this country by a famous but sad song, known to all Americans as "Maryland, My Maryland."

The Lustig boys memorized the verses, and later in their life, whenever they recalled their childhood in Canaway, they would softly hum these stanzas:

### I

"For thee my heart leaps into song,  
My native town, my native town.  
Men love the places where they dwelt,  
The hills and vales of childhood's play,  
And I, who at far shrines have knelt,  
Long now to be in Canaway.

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### II.

"To dwell amid thy quiet ways,  
My native town, my native town;  
To walk thy tree-arched streets and lanes,  
And roam in gladness o'er thy hills;  
To hear the patter of the rains—  
The dream my inmost being fills.

### III.

"Alas! a phantom hope art thou,  
My native town, my native town.  
Now all my years have grown too short,  
And boyhood seems like April snow—  
The fellows of my youthful sport  
Are shadows of the long ago.

### IV.

"But splendid still thy morning sun,  
My native town, my native town.  
And high on Bristol hill he stands.  
But nightly ghost-like moonbeams glide  
Across the lake and vine-clad lands,  
Like dead days ris'n and sanctified."

Ludwig and Gottlieb were too young to appreciate the natural beauties of their native village and the lake region. But so long as they lived they remembered the lay of the land, as we say—the lake and surrounding country. It was only as young men, on revisiting their native town that they discovered the charm and magic of the scenery. In those days the mere pleasure of riding in a boat over the smooth waters, along the shore and under the willows, in and out of coves and to and from the island, with swift

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glimpses of the town before or back of them, as the case might be, sufficed and answered all their wishes.

But this interest they did have—they were eager and curious to know how their father happened to come to this particular spot in America. One Sunday, while driving to the Sulphur Springs on the west shore of the lake, five miles from town, the subject came up, Ludwig asking his father how it was that he came to Canaway.

Lustig answered promptly: "Walked. Yes, sir," he said "I walked."

"Tell us about it, papa," Gottlieb urged, suspecting that it was something worth knowing. And, by the way, there is no better place to talk without being interrupted than on a drive in the country or on a stroll along the roads.

Lustig was in a story-telling mood, and began:

"One day, when I was a peddler—"

"Were you a peddler?" inquired Ludwig, in great surprise.

"Certainly," Lustig answered, and he let the horse walk so that he might the better tell his sons. "When we immigrants come from the old country, the quickest way we have to learn the language here is to peddle. Then, too, we must earn our living. So we peddle. There's no disgrace in that."

His sons did not understand exactly what he meant.

"What did you do?" Gottlieb asked.

"Go from house to house trying to sell my goods," Lustig explained. "Most of the time I was in the country among farmers. At every farm house I stopped, I sold something, because in those days there were few stores, and it was difficult for farmers to get to town. That's how I started in business in this country, and that's how every man of my people that I know began his business career."

Many people were out driving this beautiful Sunday after-

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noon. Now and then Lustig would stop to talk to his friends whom he met on the road. But after a while he resumed the story that had been interrupted in this way.

"I came over in the time of the Civil War, boys, the day after the battle of Gettysburg, as I learned later. I did not understand a word of English. My grandfather had a brother living in New York, whose address I had obtained from my father in the old country. I called on my granduncle, who was then an old man. He received me pleasantly, and set me to work at my trade—that was tailoring. I worked a month for him, and then he sent me to some relatives who lived in Rochester. They supplied me with a peddler's outfit, and told me to go anywhere in the country."

"Where did you go?" Ludwig asked, with a boy's impatience to know everything at once.

"Anywhere," Lustig told him, carelessly. "I did not know the country roads or the language—that is, English. But every house I stopped at they would ask me to tell them the news of the war; but I did not know what they meant."

"De noose? De noose? I repeated, just like that."

It amused the boys to hear their father imitate himself.

"Noose? I hev henkershiffs, stockin's, ribbuns, lace-goods."

"Naw, the news! What's going on in the war?" the farmers asked me, anxiously.

"I shook my head. I did not know what they were talking about; so I unpacked my bundles, opened my satchel, and showed them the stuff I had to sell. And they always bought something of me," he added, with a chuckle.

"Everyone tried to teach me how to speak English. When I said handkershiffs, I would be corrected. They made fun of me in a pleasant way."

"What did they do, papa?" the boys asked, together.

"Well, whenever I came to a farmhouse, some one, seeing



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that I was a foreigner or a greenhorn, as we were called in those days, would say:

"Hello, Dutchman! what have you got to sell?"

"I would unpack my bundles and spread out my goods on the floor. The men would come in from the fields, and then the women and children would gather around me to look at the stuff. If it was meal time, they would invite me to take dinner with them, although you know that in those days we Jewish men dare not eat everything. Sometimes I explained, as best I could, why we Jews were forbidden to eat pork, or drink milk in our coffee at dinner, or spread butter on our bread. But what a mess I made of it, trying to tell them in my broken English! They laughed at me, and imitated my words, and made me blush to the roots of my hair. Often they showed that they wanted to convert me, and invited me to attend church with them to hear their preacher. All asked me questions about the Bible. No matter how busy the farmers were, they always had time to talk with a stranger. They had a little fun with me; but none ever said an unpleasant word to me; and only on one instance was I refused a night's lodging. But that's how I came to Canaway."

The boys were looking curiously at their father. He kept his horse on a walk, so that he could better tell them this all-important matter.

"We peddlers, you know, could not afford to stop over night at a hotel. However, there were no hotels where I went. Whenever I came to a farmhouse about dusk, I asked the farmer or his wife to let me stop there till morning. No matter how much they bought of me, they would not accept pay for a night's lodging, and very few would accept pay for meals. People are different these days; but then, times have changed. I must tell you what happened one night."

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"What was it?" they asked.

"It was over in Cheshire. I have forgotten the name of the family. We were seated in the parlor talking about the Bible and the Jews; for I had got so I could make myself understood. We had been talking a long time, and then all went to bed. How long I had been asleep, I do not remember. But I was suddenly aroused by some one calling, 'Hey, Dutchman! The barn's afire!'"

"Didn't they have fire engines?" Ludwig asked, interrupting.

"Fire engines in the country!" Lustig exclaimed. "We formed a bucket brigade. I will tell you what that is. When I heard the farmer call, I hurried into my clothes and rushed down stairs. The barn was burning. Great sheets of fire shot high in the air, lighting up the whole country around. From every part of the neighborhood men came running across the fields, those coming from a distance riding on horse-back or in wagons. I never saw so many farmers in a farmyard, nor such excitement as was there. Every one had a plan, and they were shouting at the tops of their voices: 'Save the house! Save the horses! Save the cows!'"

Lustig imitated the hoarse, wild cry of excited farm folks his loud words resounding over the fields.

"Some cool-headed men shouted out: 'Fire brigade! fire brigade!'"

"What was that?" Ludwig asked, a trifle frightened by his father's vivid description.

"I'll tell you," Lustig said. "We formed in line instantly from the well to the fire. A couple of farmers kept pumping water from the well. As fast as the buckets were filled, they were passed down the line, and the last man in line threw the water on the flames.

"Fortunately, the well was deep and the pump new. We had plenty of water and saved a part of the barn. That was my first experience as a fireman in America. After I settled in Ger-

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many, I joined a volunteer fire company. Every man belongs to such a company in Canaway."

"We will, too, when we are men," the boys said, proudly.

"Pshaw! when you are young men, they will not have fires," Lustig said, mischievously.

They evidently did not understand what he meant, and, in order to spare them needless inquiries, he added, quickly: "I haven't told you yet how I came to Canaway, have I?"

"Tell us," they said, in chorus.

"One dark night I stopped at a farmer's house in Paddleford—that's five miles north of Canaway. Do you know where it is?"

"It's where the train stops first after it leaves Canaway for Rochester," Ludwig answered, promptly.

"Exactly. The locomotive runs out of Canaway so fast it must stop at Paddleford to get breath. That's right, son. It was hop-picking season; but I did not know it then, and every house was crowded with hop-pickers. Every place I stopped at, I was told they were crowded, and, at their suggestion, I started to walk to Canaway.

"I was tired, and an extra five miles to go on a dark night, with heavy things to carry, was not a pleasant prospect for me, I can tell you. But off I started, hurrying as fast I could, with a big pack on my back and filled satchels in both of my hands.

"For some time I walked on. I could scarcely see. I was very tired. The pack on my back and my two satchels were growing heavier all the time. I stumbled against stones and ran against bushes, trees and fences. It was so dark I could not keep in the road. All along the way it was as if I was blindfold. I did not know where I was going. Finally, far down the road, I saw a tiny light, and I made for it. After a while I reached the farmhouse where the light came from. And I walked into the yard.

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A dog began to bark and rushed at me. I was accustomed to such treatment from dogs, and stood prepared to knock the brute down, when a man on the porch—I do not to this day how he knew me—called out in German:

"Hello, countryman! Where are you going?"

"I was so tired that I could not answer politely. I walked up to the porch, put down my bundles, and the first words I said were: 'Can I stay here over night?'

"Come in,' the farmer said, pleasantly; 'come in, eat something and let's see who you are.'

"He spoke in German to me, and that made me happy.

"As soon as I went into the house, the entire family came into the room where I was. The farmer had a large family. His children were young men and women; and there were some relatives, all living in one farm-house. They got me something to eat and gave me some home-made wine to drink. After a little while I felt rested; but I was too tired to open my bundles. They asked me my name, and what part of Germany I came from. Then I asked again for permission to stop there over night. I was too tired to go farther."

"Stop here? Certainly,' the German said, with evident pleasure; but first we go to town to meet some of our countrymen."

"I refused, but they persuaded; and soon the farmer, his sons, and I drove off to town."

"Who was the man, papa?" Ludwig asked promptly.

"What town was it?" Gottlieb inquired, before his father had time to answer the first question.

Lustig smiled. "The man? Why, that's our friend Reeser—the best friend I have in Ontario County. And the town? Why, that was Canaway."

There was not so much mystery to it after all. The boys

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became suddenly silent. It seemed their father had reached the end of his story. But he had more to say.

"That's how I came to Canaway. Old Yakob Reeser and his sons brought me here. Well, we drove into town that night and up to Lem Sprague's clothing store. We all got out, and Reeser took me into the store.

"Lem,' he said, 'I have found a clerk for you;' and he presented me to the proprietor, who was an Englishman.

"Just the man I want,' Sprague said, as he looked at me. 'Do you speak German?'

"Sure,' Reeser answered for me. 'He is a countryman of mine.'

"What's your name?' Sprague inquired.

"Hyman Lustig,' I said.

"Hyman,' he repeated after me. 'Hyman? That won't do. Nobody here by that name. A clerk must have a name everybody knows. Suppose you call yourself Herman instead?'

"That's good,' Reeser laughed; 'call him Dutch Herman; then every one of his countrymen will buy clothing here.' And that name has clung to me to this day. Everybody knows me as Dutch Herman; but in the old country my name was Hyman."

The boys were not at all surprised at the ease with which men change their names in America.

"That was an experience for me," Lustig resumed, presently. "Sprague engaged me as a clerk then and there; and while we were talking over the arrangement, Reeser went out and brought back all the Germans in town to meet me. There were Singlaf and Mutchler, and Lintner, and Metzger, and Adolph Yahn, the furniture man, and a dozen others. They all came into the store, shook hands with me and urged me to remain in Canaway and give up peddling. I sold out my goods, and—well, I acted as a clerk for Lem a whole year. Meanwhile I learned how to sell

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clothing and speak English. Lem wanted to speculate in hops. So he sold out to me, and I started in business for myself."

"After another year I prospered so that I sent home for mamma from Schwersenz; and that's the way Lustig came to settle in Canaway."

## CHAPTER II.

### IN SCHWERSENZ

In a peaceful country town like Canaway merchants have plenty of time to visit their customers, and so had Herman Lustig. He knew intimately the men who traded at his store, and often talked to them about their farms, crops and cattle, and, naturally, their families. Pleasant as it was for him to chat with his customers, it was a still pleasanter task for him to talk with his two sons.

Lustig always had something to tell Ludwig and Gottlieb; no matter what it concerned—whether a steam velocipede (a great invention, he assured them, which would make walking unnecessary), or the new electric light, which the boys thought a marvel, as it did away with sulphur matches, wicks and kerosene. Whatever the story was, the boys were certain to be interested and to enjoy it.

Whenever their father had an idle hour he would amuse them in this way. Did they happen to step into his store on their way home from school when Lustig was not busy, he would soon gather them about him, usually around the stove, and tell them a story. If a customer dropped in during the course of the story, either to make a purchase or to rest, he, too, would sometimes listen to the tale.

In this way it happened that the Lustig boys learned and heard much of Schwersenz, the native town of Herman Lustig and his wife. Whatever their father remembered of the provincial town of Posen, the various accidents and incidents of his eventful boy-

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hood, he told Ludwig and Gottlieb. He knew no stories other than the experiences that made up his own boyhood. He had not read any story books, and even if he had taken his tales from books they would not have been half so interesting as the tales about events in which he had taken part. Every story was fascinating, and in every story Herman related he figured prominently.

The boys were naturally very proud of their father because of what he had done, and then because of the wonderful events which took place in such strange, far-away places as Schwersenz, the city of Posen, and the still greater city, Berlin.

Posen and Berlin are indeed great cities, but in the estimation of the Lustig boys Schwersenz was, in point of interest, of greater importance, Schwersenz was for them the most interesting town in all the world. In that old Prussian-Polish town of Eastern Germany, three miles as the crow flies from Posen, lived the oddest and the funniest men and women on earth. In no other place, certainly not in Canaway, existed characters the like of those that lived in Schwersenz. And Canaway, it must be remembered, had an odd array of strange persons of whom we will hear before long.

In Schwersenz there lived one peculiar person known by no other name than Schayah. This Schayah called on every Jewish resident in Schwersenz Friday afternoon to beg a pfennig to buy a candle for his Sabbath light or a plate of noodle soup for his Sabbath dinner—to mention only a few of the uses he might make of the pennies begged from his fellow townsmen.

Of Schayah the boys heard many tales. He was an old bachelor. No one knew where he came from, who his father and mother were, or his brothers and sisters, if he had any. He was neither old nor young. The oldest inhabitant of Schwersenz could not remember the day Schayah came to town. It was a tradition that the workmen in digging the foundation of the very ancient town hall dug him up. He never changed in manner or appear-



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ance. As he was in the beginning, that is, in the days of Lustig's own father, so he was in Herman Lustig's time, a short black-bearded man, his small, beady eyes always blinking. He was always twirling his thumbs; he was forever bowing, forever thanking, forever saying nothing and doing nothing.

"He lived all alone," so Lustig asserted, "in the rear room of the beadle's small house on a side street." The houses in Schwersenz are not numbered, nor are the streets named. Everybody knew where everybody lived. A family or their descendants lived in one and the same house a hundred years or more; and hence few new houses were built. Nobody knew, for that matter, when Schwersenz was founded. There is no record of the day the first house was built. They always were there, so Herman Lustig said, and no one had any reason to doubt him.

Now, Schayah, of whom I am speaking, was neither a business man nor a laborer. Had he lived in America he might have been called an errand boy, to judge from what he did in Schwersenz, that is, whenever he did do anything. If some one wanted to send a package to Posen, or to a relative in a neighboring village, Schayah would be engaged to carry the bundle. He would do it too, but you may be sure he took his time in delivering the package or whatever it might be.

Suppose it was necessary to have a pair of corn-stuffed geese in Posen on a certain Friday afternoon, and Schayah was engaged to deliver the parcel. In order to have him reach the city of Posen betimes you had to dispatch him on the Sunday previous.

"Schayah," we would ask him (so Lustig said), "why does it take you so long to carry a pair of geese to Posen?"

Schayah would shrug his shoulders, blink his eyes, and say, as slowly he walked, "Does it take me so long?"

"Longer than it took the Creator, blessed be He, to create the world."

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"Ach, yah," Schayah would answer. "If one walks too fast the geese may come to life again; and see what it would cost in that case to have the geese properly slaughtered a second time."

Schayah was not pressed for time, so one might well excuse him for taking five days to walk five miles. He was to live a hundred years, and took life leisurely in the meantime.

But he was not the only notable in the town. There was one, Crazy Carrie, as she was called. She had her own peculiarities, which nobody heeded because of her misfortune. All that Herman Lustig remembered concerning poor Carrie was a habit she had of dancing in the market place on rainy days.

"'Carrie, Carrie?' we boys would call to her," Lustig explained, "why do you dance in the market square on rainy days? Come indoors or you will catch cold!" The harder and louder we called the longer she danced. 'Carrie, Carrie, so contrary.' we would say, 'come in; it's raining.

"Then she would laugh and begin dancing, and sing something like this.

"Rain, rain, it wets the stones.

And starts the pain in old men's bones.

"Singing this refrain she would dance harder and faster. The harder it would rain the harder would she dance, until some one dragged her home."

The curious antics of this unfortunate woman amused the boys. Her mind was unbalanced by a disappointment in love, but Lustig warned them against their temptation to inquire more about her.

"Any one so afflicted," he counseled them, "is to be pitied. You must never tease an unfortunate person, such as a cripple, an idiot or a fool. It is a great sin to mock or imitate them. They are to be pitied."



**CRAZY CARRIE**

*"Rain, rain, it wets the stones, and starts the pain in old men's bones."*



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With this advice he dismissed poor Carrie, to tell them a few interesting things about Moishe Stumm, the goose herdsman.

"In the old country," Lustig would say, "some men make a living buying and selling geese. All the week they tramp about the country buying geese and driving their purchase in flocks from village to village. When they come to the town market they sell the geese; then start out again to buy more.

"Well, this Moishe Stumm was a goose herdsman. He lived in Schwersenz. Early Sunday morning he started out in his long gray-green coat, with his long staff and heavy top boots. All the week he was gone. Late Thursday night or early Friday morning he would return, driving his geese across the town square when everybody was in bed."

"'Quack, quack, quack,' is the sound the geese would make as they crept into town. The quacking of one or two geese—one pays no attention to that—but when a hundred geese wobbled into Schwersenz at the dead of night you would think some one was beating a kettle drum.

"Every one awoke with the noise. 'There comes Moishe Stumm and his geese,' they would say, and every goose goes barefooted."

Every character had some singularities unlike those of anybody the boys knew of in Canaway. Herman Lustig described well these traits.

There was Moritz Blatt, the town baker, a little fat man, whom the Schwersenz boys loved to tease; and Gabriel Fritag, the wine merchant, the wealthiest merchant in Schwersenz, who advertised his wealth by buying a dogcart, which he drove through town, to the envy of the envious and the joy of the boys, who stole a ride whenever they could escape the merchant's whip. Then there was Leiser Lesser, the town fiddler, who sawed over

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and over again his unmusical renditions at all the weddings in Schwersenz.

All these scenes were very vivid in Lustig's mind, and vividly he would describe them to his boys. To their imaginative minds Schwersenz, with those persons who seemed to be created to amuse children with their strange, odd and curious sayings and doings, was as romantic as fairyland.

Among those of lesser fame whom Lustig remembered were Gabriel Lesser, the hunchback glazier, son of Leiser Lesser, who was never seen unaccompanied by his good dog. The dumb animal was an amiable companion to him, and to the animal Lesser would turn whenever any one addressed him.

The dog's name was Schnukle. "Say, Schnukle, what does the fellow mean?" he would ask, whenever anybody addressed him.

Schnukle, the dog, would bark his answer.

"So the man ought to break a window in his house. I haven't put in a window for him since his first-born was made a son of the covenant."

"Well, Gabriel, how does it go with you?"

He always had an answer. "How does it go with me?" he would ask, looking down at his dog. "It goes on two feet and four feet. Is it not so, Schnukle? Tell him how it goes with you, Schnukle. On four feet?"

The dog barked.

"On four feet, sir, on four feet. Good-by."

Then he would turn around and walk in the opposite direction, as if he were afraid to speak, poor fellow. He died many years ago. But I can see him today, going down the street with his box of glass, or, oftener, with his hands held apart in a steady position.

"Well, Gabriel, how goes it?"



*MOISHE STUMM*  
"And every goose went barefooted."





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No answer.

"Well, Gabriel, why do you hold your hands in that one position?"

"Don't talk to me, or you will break my measure. This is the measure of a window. Come, Schnukle. Good-by, sir."

Gottlieb and Ludwig were very anxious to meet these people and see for themselves how they acted. Schayah, to be sure, they wished to see more than any one, and despite their father's warning, they wished to see Carrie dance on rainy days. They would like to have seen Moishe Stumm, the goose herdsman; Moritz Blatt, the baker; Leiser Lesser, the fiddler, and his hunch-back son, the glazier. These people they would have gone miles merely to look at. Also did they want to see Nicholas Polauski, the Polish town watchman, who guarded the streets and houses at night, and every hour sung out low but musically, "One o'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock, four o'clock, five o'clock, and in winter, six o'clock. In summer time he stopped at five o'clock. This was the hour for busy people to be up. At this hour the old wooden shutters were unbolted, the good housewives started for the town pump to get a bucket of fresh water, and the whirl and bustle of domestic cares began again and continued its monotonous round. For every day was alike in Schwersenz, as far as the women were concerned.

But there were other things besides the peculiar people which they wished to see. There was the old house, with its low ceiling, in which Lustig was born. There was the porcelain stove standing in the corner, on the top of which Lustig assured his sons he had often slept on cold winter nights. Then it was he heard the wind roar down the chimney and growl at little children. Ludwig and Gottlieb would also like to see how sand was strewn over the hard wood floor instead of carpet; and more than all, they wished they had a curtained bed to sleep in from which they could peek

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out early in the morning, when the roosters began their serenades.

They were strange roosters, these Schwersenz roosters; and Lustig soon convinced his sons that the Schwersenz roosters actually sang and talked. Every morning the roosters would begin:

Kick-er-e-kick-er-e-koo!

Good morn, I say to you.

I am the cock; it's 4 o'clock—

Good morn, I say to you.

"Oh, papa," Ludwig interrupted his father, "do the roosters talk in Schwersenz?"

It was astonishing what marvelous creatures these Schwersenz roosters were, and the boys stared at their father in wonderment as he continued:

"Certainly," Lustig affirmed dryly. "In Schwersenz the roosters sing, and so do the hens."

"Well, my bantam rooster doesn't sing," Gottlieb promptly interrupted. "When I go near him he flies away and won't talk to me."

"Oh, you don't understand their language," his father returned slyly. "King Solomon—you remember I told you about the wise king who knew the language of birds and beasts—he could talk to his hens and roosters. But in Schwersenz we boys learned to talk to the chickens just as he did."

"Mrs. Ashley's hens don't sing, either, papa," Ludwig hastened to add, still incredulous and mystified. "I listened all day to her hens to hear them talk, but they never speak like you do."

"Oh, they don't talk like people. They cackle in chicken talk. Some day when you go in the back yard and listen you will hear the hens say:

"Kluck, kluck, kluck,

Wish me luck.

One egg for Millie,

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Another one for Meg—  
Out here in the nest  
A fresh white egg."

Not only the people, but the dogs and cats, the chickens and geese, the cows and horses of Schwersenz were marvelous creatures. There were no beings on the face of the earth like the men and animals of that old town. No wonder, then, the boys were curious to see this wonderful place.

Then there was the old wind mill, out a short distance from the town. It was a very old stone mill, with big broad arms which used to turn slowly around whenever the wind blew hard, groaning as they turned, as if in pain. Every time the wind blew the mill moaned like one suffering from a fatal sickness. In the daytime the moaning frightened no one. But on dark, stormy nights the mill's groaning would wake people up, and then the good folk of Schwersenz, aroused from their sleep by these unpleasant sounds, would sit up in their beds and listen. It was only the old grist mill. "The old mill is groaning," they would say; "some one is dying," and then they would fall asleep again.

But this was not so with the children. Hearing the old mill they would wake up, hearken, and then cover their heads in fright, for fear the groaning monster might come and strike them with one of its immense arms.

"We have no mills here in Canaway, have we, papa?" the boys asked, when Lustig told them about the ancient wind mill.

"Yes, we have. We have a saw mill, a grist mill, a spoke factory and a brick yard, and some farmers in Hopeville have wind mills."

"But they are not like the mill in Schwersenz?" Gottlieb inquired. They don't make any noise, and then you can't see them."

"Well, this is America. Here people are too busy to pay any

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attention to a wind mill. Once we boys tried to stop the mill. Did I ever tell you about that incident?"

"No, no!" they cried in chorus, delighted at the prospect of another story.

"Once we Schwersenz boys thought we would play a trick on the old mill and stop it. There was Mendel Lesser, Morris Lesser, the fiddler's son; Adolph Rich (my cousin), Ludwig Levi-sohn and myself.

"We got some strong string, and one moonlight night we started out to tie the arms of the old mill. Out in the fields it stood, a big black object against the sky. We went up to it as quietly as we could, so that we might not start it. For the mill was alive, you know, and if any one came near it it would start. Round and round the arms would whirl, beating the air and chasing the moon. Every time the mill turned, 'Ouh, ouh, groo, groo,' it would sing, just like that.

"We crept up," Lustig continued, "quiet as mice. The mill did not hear us. But we were frightened; so scared we dare scarcely breathe. I could hear my heart pounding inside of me, and once Mendel Lesser stumbled on a stone and began to cry.

"'Keep still,' we told him, 'for the mill will hear us and run after us.'

"So he hushed, and on we marched. I took out my rope and tied it around the big wooden arms, and Adolph Rich tied his string around another arm. Mendel Lesser stood between us to warn us if the old miller should happen to see us. No man came, so we tied the arms as tight as we could.

"Suddenly, I tell you it was so quick I didn't know how it happened, the mill started and lifted Adolph in the air.

"'Mendel, Hyman, Morris!' he cried, 'take me down. The old mill's going to eat me up. Take me down!' My heavens, we were scared. There was Adolph, up in the air, hanging to an

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arm of the mill and crying and screaming so loud that you could hear him in Posen.

"Then we all began to scream. We made so much noise the old miller heard us and crept out of his little hut inside the mill, swinging his lantern.

"Here! What is this!" he yelled at us.

"Take me down, take me down!" Adolph cried, 'take me down!'"

"Get down yourself. You got up there yourself, now get down yourself!"

"Oh, dear, oh, dear, I can't get down. The mill will eat me up."

"So, so!" the miller exclaimed. "The mill will eat you up? Since when are you rye? Are you grain you little fool? The mill eats grain. What do you want up there? Come down, I say."

"We wanted to stop the mill. It makes too much noise. It frightens us and we can't sleep," we told him, all shaking in our boots with fright.

"Ah, ha, you Schwersenzer rascals, want to stop my mill? Are you stronger than the wind? Want to stop the wind? The wind turns the mill, the mill grinds the grain, and the grain feeds the people. Stop the wind, eh? You rascals!"

"Take me down, take me down. I will never do it again!" Adolph cried.

"Ah, play tricks on the old miller? Stay up there and go to sleep. When the wind blows you will come down."

"Take me down. I'm falling. Quick, take me down!"

"Ach, you silly boys. Take hold of this arm and pull it." We all took hold. "Say, you, up there," he called to Adolph, "hold on now and we'll pull you down. "Around came the arms," and Lustig illustrated the motion by a wide whirl of his arms. "Slow, slow it turned around. When Adolph was near enough

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to the ground he let go and fell, and then, jumping to his feet as quickly as he could, he ran home, and all of us after him.

"We never went near that that mill again, No, siree."

The boys breathed easier when Adolph and his friends were safely home and in bed. But one story invited another. One never satisfied them, especially on a dull, rainy afternoon.

"What else did the boys do?" they asked their father.

"Oh' we went to school, just as you do here." Lustig answered. "We called it Cheder, and our teacher was a man."

Just this hint that at one time their own father attended school was sufficient to make them ask many questions about it and his teacher. Having nothing better to do, Lustig told them all he knew about his school life.

"In the old country we went to school at 6 o'clock in the morning in summer time, and at 7 in winter months. And we stayed there all day.

"Our school was a rear room of the synagogue. The teacher would stand at his desk when we entered the room, looking very sharply at us. Sometimes the room was cold. We boys were always cold.

"Open your books', our teacher would say, 'and begin.'"

"All of us then read the morning prayers from the prayer book. That is how we started. After that we would turn to the older boys and begin a translation from the five books of Moses. If any one missed a word or forgot the meaning of it he would rap them over the knuckles.

"Forget, do you?' the teacher would say, 'I told you Dabash means honey. That's something to eat. You can do that—eat. But learn, no. You forget everything. Dabash means honey. Now remember it.' And he would hit the unfortunate scholar over his knuckles to make him remember. He used a long ruler, and it was hard as a stone. I tell you it hurt."



*THE SCHWERSENZ MILL*

*"He ran home, and all of us after him."*





## IN SCHWERSENZ

The boys looked very sober and surprised as Lustig winced. The recollection of this petty chastisement was still clear in his memory.

"Oh, it's different in this country. I know that," he said, noticing the sober faces of his sons. "Our school room was very small and the small windows did not let in much light. In winter time the supply of wood would sometimes burn out, and then there would be no logs left in the bin. The wind rattled the windows, and the snow blew down into the chimney and into the stove and put out the fire.

"Up and down our teacher walked, wrapping his sheep skin coat about him and drawing his fur cap down over his ears. All one could see of his face was two black eyes and his long side curls hanging from his temples.

"See, now, you bad boys! Fool your teacher, will you? Put snow in the stove, will you? All day long you must stay here and study. An extra passage for you all in addition. Now, study!"

"Up and down the room he walked, his arms folded, turning now to this boy and then to that boy. 'Here, you, study.' To that one he said, 'study.' Study hard, all of you, and you will get warm."

"Did you have a vacation?" Ludwig asked.

"Every Friday afternoon and all day Saturday."

"Friday afternoon?" they asked in astonishment. "We go to school on Friday, and sometimes we speak pieces on Fridays." Gottlieb informed his father.

"We had to get ready for Schabbus, you know. Friday was a busy day in Schwersenz. We boys had to brush our clothes, polish our boots, and then be washed and combed. Friday night and Saturday were the great events of the week. There's

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nothing like it here in America. Schabbus was a great day for the boys."

"What did you do?" they inquired, expecting, of course, that the usual doings of the Schwersenz boys meant something very exciting.

"I will tell you why we boys waited for Friday. On that day we went to the town baker."

"What was his name?" Ludwig asked.

"Haven't I ever told you of Moritz Blatt, the town baker?"

"Tell us something about him, papa."

"In Schwersenz," Lustig began, leisurely, enjoying the telling of these events of his boyhood as much as his sons did the hearing of them, "everybody can not afford a baking oven. Wood was expensive, and so was peat, a kind of soft coal. The hard coal we use in this country is unknown in Germany. So a man builds an oven and bakes all the cakes and bread for the people in his oven."

"Like Smith's?" Gottlieb suggested, referring to the local steam bakery, which manufactured a famous soda biscuit.

"No, no; nothing like that," Lustig told them. "Our village baker, Blatt, lived in a little house on a side street. In his kitchen he had a big porcelain stove. In that he did all his baking. What fun we had with him, more fun with him than with any other man in Schwersenz."

Lustig laughed at his own recollection of the baker.

"Blatt was a little fat man," he told them, "with big, fat fingers, and a face as round as a pumpkin—or it would have been had he shaved off his beard as men do in this country. Out there no one is clean shaven, and his gray beard was always full of flour."

"Well, sir, when I came in with the dough—my mother of blessed memory, what cakes she baked! There were no other cakes in all Schwersenz as sweet as those my mother made."

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The dough was prepared at home, and one of us carried it to the baker.

"So, so!—this is what Blatt would say. 'Lustig's cake!' Then he would lift the napkin my mother had wrapped around the dough, and look at it as if it were some precious jewel. 'A bunt kuchen this week? The Freitag's, the Grau's, the Solomon's, all bunt kuchen. Last week raisin cakes, this week bunt kuchen. So, So. Schwersenz is richer than Posen. In Posen they eat bread. That's good enough for them. But we Schwersenzers are richer. We eat cake.'

"He would keep that up all day if you didn't stop him. To get an answer one had to go up to him and pull at his apron.

"When will our cakes be ready, Herr Blatt?"

"Ready? Ready? How can I bake your cakes? My oven's full!"

"He always told us the same thing—his oven was full; so we never paid any attention to him. We didn't care what he said. We boys wanted a piece of cake.

"Herr Blatt,' we would say, 'give us a piece of cake.'

"So, so. Cake is what you want? Hungry again. I have no cake. I am baking bread. My oven's full of bread."

"Oh, please, Herr Blatt, give us a piece of cake. We will grease a pan for you; pit raisins; run errands—please give us a piece of cake."

"But he wouldn't give us anything. He pretended not to hear us and began dancing around the kitchen, throwing a handful of flour into a pan, opening his oven door and squinting his eyes at the things in the oven.

"We boys, of course, would not leave. If he refused to give us anything, we pulled his apron strings and then said:

"Herr Blatt, your apron strings are untied. Give us a piece

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of cake, and we will tie your apron strings for you so they will never come untied.'

"Some more nonsense. So, so; be gone now, or there will be no Schabbus cake in Schwersenz tonight.' And he would start towards us as if he meant to hit one of us, striking out his arms anywhere.

"But we were as quick as he. One of us would take a pan and drop it on the floor. He would run and pick it up. Then another one would run behind him and untie his apron strings. That would make him angry.

"Here, you rascals, take this and leave me.'

"And he would throw some cookies at us, and off we scamp-ered.

"That was great fun, boys. What fine cookies they were. Almost as good as those we had after Kiddush."

"What was that?" The strange word attracted them, so Lustig explained:

"In every Jewish home in Schwersenz the father gives Kiddush. That is a little service at his table to welcome the Sabbath day. About six o'clock in the evening the men and boys of Schwersenz go to Schule, and after Schule we go home for Kiddush. Before we ate our supper my father—your grandpa—would, after pronouncing the blessing over the wine, as he always did over the bread, give each of us a sip of it. And calling each of his children to his side, he blessed us, putting his hand on our heads, and told us to grow up to be useful men and women.

"That was Kiddush; and then we were ready for supper. By that time we were very hungry. We were always hungry—and on Friday night we had a fine supper. My mother would bring in fish and noodles and cakes. Sometimes we would not have enough to eat, but on Friday night we always had a plenty. That was the happiest night in the week.

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"After supper everyone was feeling first-rate; my father would tell us stories just as I have been telling you. He had so many things to relate about the French soldiers that marched against Moscow when he was a little fellow; stories from the Bible about Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David and Solomon—all the great men of Israel. I never forgot them. And other stories from Talmud about the man who slept longer than Rip Van Winkle, and the traveler who walked through a tunnel that was made of the bone of a giant. Oh, what stories he knew! Ah! you should have heard him—he could tell stories.

"Those were great days, boys; we haven't anything like that in America."

The boys did not understand what their father meant, but he was in the mood for story telling, so they did not interrupt him. No customer came into the store. The dull March afternoon invited this diversion.

"No, sirree! I will never forget Friday nights in Schwersenz. I can now see my father and mother sitting around the table, with all their children about them. On such nights we burned four candles, on other nights one, unless we did without them altogether. On that night we had a snow-white table cloth, other nights we had none. I tell you, boys, we do not know how fortunate we are here in America. Sometimes my father was at his wits end, thinking how he was to buy food for us all. He looked sad and down-hearted. But Friday evenings he was happy, and so was my mother.

"We never had company on any day of the week but Friday. Once my father brought a young man home from Schule. He was merely a boy. He was tall and curly-headed, with two little curls hanging down the sides of his young boyish face. His eyes were very large and bright. I remember that, because he looked

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at everyone and smiled and winked his eyes as if he wished to please us.

"What a surprise he gave us! I'll tell you what he did:

"After supper my father asked him to sing, and he did. I have never heard anyone sing better than he, and no wonder. He went to Berlin afterward, and when they heard him they engaged him for the opera. And he afterward became famous.

"I do not remember all he sang, but this is one of the songs:

" 'When is the Jew in Paradise,  
Unchained from want and care?  
When joy wings words of happiness,  
And peace perfumes the air;  
When is the hour his heart is light,  
And slow he is to grieve?  
The Jew has but one Paradise,  
And that is Friday eve.

" 'A noble queen, she comes to bless,  
And bear his cares away.  
To every home this Princess comes  
And sanctifies the day.  
The rich and poor, both old and young,  
With gratitude receive  
The Sabbath princess of the Jew,  
Their guest of Friday eve.

" 'Who sees her face Shekinah-like,  
He lives a hundred years;  
His children's children bless her name,  
For all that she endears;  
Her sacred, silent footsteps pass  
Through every heart and leave  
A thousand blessings for the joy  
She gives on Friday eve.'

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"Now, that's all I remember of the song, boys," Lustig hastened to add, in order to keep them from asking him to recite another poem. For he had made no attempt to sing it, but merely repeated the words of the song.

Finally Gottlieb asked him, after hearing so many stories and adventures of this famous town: "Why did you leave it?"

That anyone should ever wish to quit this enchanted place passed understanding.

"Why did I leave?" Lustig laughed. "To make a living, boys; to make a living. Ah! Schwersenz is a good place to be born in, but not to stay in."

They did not comprehend this, as he soon realized by the blank look on their faces.

"This is how I left Schwersenz, boys," he said slowly. "The day after my Barmitzvah—that is, when I was thirteen years old—my father said; 'Hyman'—that was my name in the old country—'Hyman, now it is time for you to go to work and earn your own living like a man.'"

"So he took me to Jacob Solomon, the tailor, and Mr. Solomon engaged me to learn the tailoring business. He gave me a needle and thread and a place to get on his working table, and told me to watch him. That's the way I began my trade. After I had been with him a few years he told me it was time to start on my apprentice journeys. Every mechanic in Germany travels about the country and works under different bosses, so as to learn the best methods of the trade. Well, when I was ready, I tied my clothes in a bundle and told my father and mother I was ready to leave home."

I called on all my friends and bade them farewell. I had to see everybody. I said good-by to Schayah; to crazy Carrie; to Moishe Stumm, the goose-herdsman; to Leiser Lesser, the fiddler; to Moritz Blatt, the baker; to Mr. Grau; to Mr. Fritag, to Mendel

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and Morris Lesser, and to Adolph Rich—to every boy and girl in town. I said good-bye to everyone and everybody said good-bye to me. One gave me a necktie, another a pair of stockings, one made a cake, and one little girl whose name was Rosalia"—

"That's mamma's name, papa," Gottlieb promptly interrupted.

"Yes, I know that," Lustig said, pleasantly. "Well, this little girl named Rosalia gave me a bouquet, and I kept that bouquet pressed in my coat pocket for years.

"When the hour came for me to leave home, my mother kissed me and then cried and kissed me again and again: 'My son, I am your mother. I gave you life. Now I send you into the world. Be kind, be honest, be industrious, and the Lord will never forsake you. This is your mother's blessing.'

"Well, sir, she cried; I cried. My younger brothers and sisters, seeing all of us in tears, wept also, and then my father took me by the hand and we started out."

"Didn't you take the cars?" they asked.

"No, no. There were no cars in those days. We walked. My father led me down the street. Everybody came to wave good-bye and wish me good fortune. I crossed the market square where I had played so many times; passed the old pump where I had filled so many buckets of water—passed all the houses of the street. And I tell you when I came to the last house and knew that I was going out of Schwersenz, my heart sank and I could hardly walk. My father was at my side. He never said a word till we came to the Jewish burial ground just outside of the town on the Posen road. Then he stopped.

"This is as far as I can go with you, my son. I have started you on your way. Now you must go alone.' He kissed me and began to cry.



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"When I saw him weep, I knew he felt bad. I began to feel weak and my knees shook. I turned pale, so I suppose, and the cold sweat stood on my forehead. I used to think it was fun to go away from home. Now that I was actually going, I felt sorry. I wished I could turn back and never leave. But it was too late. I must make my own living in the world.

"My father soon dried his tears, and, taking me by the hand, looked me straight in the eyes. 'Hyman,' he said, solemnly, 'your father is a very poor man. Little has he been able to give you. All that he gave you was the blessing of a good name. I can ask nothing of you; I want nothing of you but that you grow up to be a useful man. Be honest. Never despise hard work, and never forget that you are a Jew.'

"Here,' and he pointed to the old Jewish burial ground; 'here is where your grandparents rest, and here, in God's good time, am I to rest. These men and women were Jews, and lived honest, frugal, industrious lives. That is all I can ask of you. Now, good-bye, my son. The Lord bless you and keep you.'

"Then he turned around and walked back to town. I stood awhile and watched him. He never looked back, but kept on till he turned around the corner and was gone. I walked onward awhile, then stopped and looked back. I could see a cluster of houses—that was Schwersenz. Before me I saw the tops of buildings rising above the wall surrounding Posen. I stood midway between Schwersenz and Posen. Of course, I was young; I didn't know what it meant. But I felt very lonely and more like crying than going to Posen.

"Pretty soon I started to walk again, walking as fast as I could; and then I stopped and looked back again for the last time. I could see no more of Schwersenz. I was alone in the world. A little later I passed through the gates of Posen to find the man I was to work for.

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"That's how I left Schwersenz. I went back there once to bid my parents good-bye when I started for Berlin. After that I never again saw my parents nor Schwersenz."

## CHAPTER III.

### TRUMMER.

The Lustigs were the only Jewish people in Canaway, but by no means were they lonesome. On the contrary, their friends and acquaintances were many.

Ludwig and Gottlieb had many playmates. Every boy living on Bristol street was glad to come and play with them. Boys in country towns have a habit of wandering about from street to street in search of one another, but Gottlieb and Ludwig had no need to do this. Instead, their playmates always came to their house and played in the back yard. This the boys liked to do because there were many dry goods boxes kept in the yard. With these boxes the boys made huts and forts to play in; here they could hammer, saw and dig. Indeed, great and joyous was their sport.

Mrs Lustig, too, made friends with her neighbors. Both Mrs. Ashley and Mrs. Mutchler were her intimate friends and with either she exchanged pies and cakes after the manner of housewives.

Whenever Mrs. Lustig cooked sweet-sour fish, a hitherto unknown delicacy in Canaway, every woman on Bristol street had a sample of it and voiced the praise of the giver's ability to cook.

And Herman Lustig was well known in Canaway. Along Canaway Lake, over in Cheshire, through Bristol and throughout the Middlesex Valley every farmer, grape grower, stage driver and farmhand knew "Dutch Herman" (as he was called by the Americans), the proprietor of the Rochester Clothing Store.

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Lustig's store was, in fact, the headquarters of every German farmer in the vineyard district of Canaway Lake and Naples. Whenever the farmers came to town they stepped into Lustig's, whether to make a purchase or not. There they left their bundles and sometimes their wives and babies while attending to matters that called them elsewhere.

Not only was Lustig their clothing merchant, but he was also their amanuensis, their letter writer, their lawyer, their banker. To him they brought their immigrant relatives to be newly clothed for their adventures in America. From him the townfolk bought their wedding suits, confirmation suits for their boys and girls, and, alas, after the manner of all things human, they bought the clothes in which to dress their beloved dead.

That he was a German and called Germany his fatherland was sufficient to make him a countryman to all his German compatriots, albeit, Posen and the Rhinegegand are far apart. He would tell the farmers the local news, forecast the weather, inquire about the crops, and, if necessary, advise in matters of business.

Popular as he was among the farmers, he was equally so with the townfolk of Canaway. With his wife he attended all church fairs, lodge dances and masquerades. Whenever Father English, the pastor of St. Mary's, the Catholic Church, held a bazaar for the benefit of the parish, Herman Lustig was sure to open it or to award the prizes. Whenever one of the Protestant churches held a chicken or turkey or oyster supper Mr. and Mrs. Lustig were accorded the seat of honor at the table, which is at the right hand of the pastor. In town or in the neighboring country villages Lustig was never forgotten whenever something unusual happened, such as the dedication of a church or the installation of a new minister. To attend these events he often had to ride many miles, but nevertheless he always made it his business to attend. When the Lutheran Church was dedicated at Bristol Springs Lustig was among

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the distinguished guests, which included the noted German divines of Naples, Bristol Center and Cheshire.

In a word, Herman Lustig was everybody's friend among the farmers of Ontario County and the townfolk of Canaway.

But in Canaway there was an inner special circle. This was recruited from among the German population of the village. Every evening in summer or winter the select few came to Lustig's store to talk over politics, religion and the drift of events in the old country.

They were a merry set and bantered and joked one another good naturedly until they were weary. Not an evening of the week days passed without a visit from Gabriel Sinlaf, the local beer agent for the Rochester breweries; Henry Mutchler, the butcher; Jacob Metzger, the harnessmaker; Leopold Linther, the upholsterer, or Trummer, the shoemaker.

These men, with the exception of Trummer, were only Lustig's friends, but Trummer, however, was also the friend of Gottlieb and Ludwig.

No one knew Trummer by any other name. He had none. To each and to all he was just simply Trummer, a small, slight undersized man, shy and reticent. His face was one of the hatchet sort and came to a sharp point at the end of his chin. He wore a mustache which was never trimmed, and during the winter months he grew a beard that was likewise neglected.

Every week day evening at about the same hour he stepped into Lustig's store, lighted his black, smoke-stained clay pipe, read a German newspaper and said nothing. Seldom, and then only when appealed to in the heat of a controversy would he speak. One subject, and only one, forced him to talk, and that was when the nationality of his country was in question.

On that subject he was not a man of few words, but an orator defending the lost cause of a united Poland.

Lustig had known him many years, and in all that time had

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never heard a word of complaint from him. All the information which Trummer's friends obtained concerning his career, ancestry, education and ambitions came in his outburst of oratory.

In such excited moments he had related about his forefathers, who were nobles driven from their estates by the allied armies of Germany, Austria and Russia, by which countries Poland was shared as if it were a piece of cake.

"Oh, my country, my country!" he would moan. "I have no fatherland now. We are not Germans, we are Poles. We are not Austrians or Russians, we are Poles. Some good day God will restore our fatherland. Wait!"

But it was not as a defender of a lost nationality that he was especially endeared to the boys. They were attached to him for very good reasons from a boy's point of view. In the first place, Trummer was the only shoemaker in Canaway who cut a square hole in the heels of their shoes in which to fit the knob of the half-club skate.

And then again, when work was slack, Trummer would tell the boys some wonderful stories, not only about his own experience, but also about what he had either read or heard.

All that Gottlieb and Ludwig knew of his life was his arrival in Canaway, and that they never forgot because they witnessed it themselves.

One afternoon in March on their way home from school, they stepped into the store just as Pat Doyle, the town constable, was leading their father out. The town constable was a person to fear, and the boys were at the point of crying when he quieted their apprehension by inviting them to come along with him and he would show them something.

There they found Trummer. It seems he had stopped in Canaway because he had no money to go further, and, having

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been unable to make himself understood to the officer, he was arrested, and Lustig was called upon to act as interpreter.

The latter spoke to him in German, which Trummer understood perfectly, and then to convince the stranger that he was among human beings Lustig spoke a few Polish words to him. The officer being satisfied that his prisoner was a harmless fellow, released him forthwith. Lustig set him up in business; that is, he furnished rooms and gave him money for present needs and for tools and materials.

His shop was over Lustig's store, a small front room facing Main street. In another room back of that and adjoining it he cooked and slept. For a table he used dry goods boxes, and for a bed an old second-hand couch. Here he lived an indrawn, solitary life, boarding himself and repairing shoes. He was a stranger in a strange land, and had only one friend, Herman Lustig, whose attachment for him was due to the fact that both hailed from the Province of Posen.

A hall opening on Main street led up to Trummer's shop. The stairs were narrow and dirty. At one side of the doorway' nailed against the building was a board sign on which Lustig had painted with what artistic skill an untrained hand could evoke, the outlines of a boot and the still cruder form of a shoe. Under these craft emblems were the following words:

BOOTS AND SHOES REPAIRED. UP STAIRS.

Within a short time all Canaway knew of the new arrival, and those who were interested enough to inquire learned that the new cobbler's name was Trummer. Little more than this nobody knew. Where he had hailed from, where his parents lived, if he had any; what his plans and purposes were, who his noble ancestors might be, no one, not even Lustig, knew. Trummer never

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enlightened Lustig nor his circle of friends, and they, to return the compliment, never asked him.

His family history was not of special interest to the boys. Whenever they had any shoes to repair they would run up to his shop, being glad to get the chance to put him in an amiable mood.

"Tell us a story, Mr. Trummer," Ludwig would say, as he handed him his shoes. While examining them critically Trummer would answer: "I do not know any stories." Then, setting the shoes aside, he would continue the task in hand.

"Yes, you do," the boys would persist. "You once told us one."

"I am too busy now. Leave me alone. I am fixing a pair of boots for Sheriff Boswell. I can't tell you a story when I am so busy." They would both urge and tease, and finally, brushing the scraps of leather from his apron he would yield to their entreaties, but on one condition: They must not ask him to tell them another story.

This, of course, they promised.

"I can't stay awake all night like King Frederick, telling you stories."

"Who was King Frederick?" both asked at once.

"Ach, I am so busy; another time."

"No, now, Trummer. Please tell us."

And finding a comfortable seat on a box they were ready to listen.

"Frederick the Great," so Trummer began, "had many strange notions. He thought himself very wise and always made friends with the learned men. One day he heard a professor lecture on sleep. This professor said men waste all their lives in sleeping. They sleep at night; they sleep during the day, and they would sleep all day were it not necessary to earn a living. Sleep is a foolishness. Men ought to invent a medicine to prevent sleep. Child-



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ren and babies and old people can afford to sleep, but not kings.

"This pleased Great Frederick. He thought he would find a way to prevent sleep and show the professor how to do it.

"So that night when everybody was ready to go to bed he had his coachman saddle his swift horse, and, putting on old clothes to disguise himself, so that none of his subjects could recognize him, he set out alone on the highway. Everybody was asleep. It was so still one could hear the horse as he galloped along the road.

"When he had been on his way a few hours he met some men returning from a wedding feast. They had been drinking more wine than was good for them, and so were very noisy, singing and shouting as loud as they could.

"See here,' said the king as he rode up to them, 'you are making too much noise. With your singing you will disturb the good people who are asleep.'

"No one hears us, brother,' they said, not knowing the stranger on horseback was the king. 'Suppose some one does hear us, they will know that we are returning from a wedding feast. If they have been invited they will join our chorus. If they have not been they will tell us to go on. But what's the use of sleeping? Sleep is good for babies and old women. We don't believe in sleep. While we live, we live. When we are dead, let us sleep.'

"This pleased the king very much. 'I perceive, he said, that you are wise men. I do not myself believe in sleep.'

"He wished to compliment them, but they were afraid of him now. 'Don't you know,' the spokesman said, 'that the king does not like to have men on the highway late at night? Who are you, brother?'

"I am a merchant on my way to Dresden. But tell me, brothers, what think you of our king? Is he not a wise man?'

"What have you to do with the king? Tell him that you are

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on your way to Dresden where they make china dolls as strong as soldiers and he will decorate you.'

"The king galloped off, laughing at what he heard.

"All that night he rode around the country, and early the next morning returned to his palace and began his day's work.

"On the following night he rode out again, going in another direction. But he did not feel as lively as he had on the night before. He was so tired that his bones ached. Even a king's bones sometimes ache, you see; and besides he felt dizzy. But spurring his horse he rode faster, and gradually, unknown to himself, he fell into a doze and finally fell asleep."

"On horseback?" Ludwig interrupted.

"On horseback," Trummer repeated soberly. "That's true. Soldiers have been found standing guard fast asleep. Men have fallen asleep marching. Men have fallen asleep on horseback—that's true," he remarked emphatically.

"And so it was with King Frederick. He was fast asleep on his horse.

"Now, a horse, when no one guides it, goes anywhere, and at night follows the road till it comes to a barn. And the king's horse jogged on till it came to an open barn door and then in it walked and stood in an empty stall. The horse and rider remained there till the farmer came to the barn early the next morning."

"What did the farmer see?" Gottlieb anxiously asked.

"He found a strange horse in the stall and a man astride on the strange horse. When the farmer saw this he ran out, yelling to arouse his neighbors.

"'The Evil One is in my barn,' he shouted, 'the Evil One. Half man, half horse.'

"The farmers, hearing his frantic cries, came rushing to his aid. Some brought guns, others lances, and all had stones or sticks in their hands.

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"When they arrived at the barn the bravest one walked in to see what kind of a creature the Evil One was.

"He walked in slowly. Every one stood ready to commence an assault on the Evil One should he suddenly rush out. But he didn't rush out. Instead, out came the farmer laughing. 'Why, he said 'it's a man asleep on horseback. An elegant gentlemen, too, who has lost his way.'

"But the other farmers, those who stood outside, filled with fear, would not believe their neighbor. 'No, no.' they shouted. 'It is a devil come to destroy us for our sins. Send for the pastor to absolve us, lest we die.'

"'Come, come,' said a wise farmer; 'let us deal sensibly. If it be a man asleep on horseback, as our good neighbor claims, he will wake. If it be the Evil One, let us bind him with ropes and take him to the king for a gift.'

"Thereupon, they all began to shout and make a loud noise. The horse took fright at this and shook the king off his back.

"The king fell to the floor of the stall in a heap. All gathered about him suspiciously to see what sort of a creature he was. They poked him, shook him, and shouted in his ears. Finally he awoke.

"'What is this? I am the king! Who dare disturb my sleep?'

"'The king! Our King Frederick!' they yelled in derision. The fellow's crazy. Tie him up and take him to the village pastor. Some evil spirit has possessed him. The king does not sleep in barns.'

"'Here, you farmers; do you not know your own King Frederick?'

'You take his name in vain,' angrily they shouted back.

"'I am the king. Come with me to my palace, and I will give each a gold piece and a medal. Then, indeed, will you know that I am king!'

"By this time the village pastor arrived, and to him the king

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was compelled to explain his adventures—how, trying to overcome sleep he had ridden two nights without closing his eyes, and, finally, exhausted by the effort, had fallen asleep while on his horse.

"Oh," the pastor moaned, "I have found how the king tries to put God aside. Now I am sure the king is tempting the Almighty."

"This is no place to deliver a sermon," the king exclaimed in anger. "Come to my palace and hold forth to your heart's content."

"So the king was compelled to ride back to his great palace in Berlin with the farmers and the village pastor. When the party reached the palace they were met by all the soldiers and servants, who bowed before his Majesty; and then it was that the country folks realized that it was the king whom they had found in the barn. An apology they humbly offered for their harsh words and for the ill-treatment they had given the king, and begged him to spare their lives, as they were innocent of any intent to do wrong.

"The king was wise. He gave each a gold piece, as he had promised; also a medal and a bottle of French wine. He sent them home, happy and astonished.

"But you can bet he never tried the trick again."

With this brief comment, Trummer picked up the shoe he had been repairing and dismissed the boys with the warning never to bother him again.

Hurrying down stairs they ran into their father's store and told him briefly but with much joy the wonderful tale which Trummer related.

"Ah, yes," Lustig would say, "Trummer knows many stories. He is educated."

Acting on this hint, the boys entreated the cobbler for a story whenever they had the chance—whether on the street or in their father's store.

"I do not know any more stories," Trummer would say, slyly,

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re-lighting his pipe or turning to his paper, if he had happened to be in his store.

"Yes, you do," the boys persisted. "You told us one."

"Some day," he mumbled over the edge of his newspaper. But that day was far off.

Spring came, and then summer. There were circuses in town, a fireman's parade, the county fair, the annual Methodist camp-meeting, and finally Thanksgiving, and the first heavy snow of the winter. The ice was now thickening on the creeks and the boys were beginning to skate.

With pairs of heavy winter shoes in their hands, the boys trudged into Trummer's shop to have the hole cut in the heel for the skate, and then with all the frankness of boys who insist on their rights, they demanded of Trummer to tell them another story.

"Ach, I don't know any stories," he snapped, picking up the shoes they brought him. Now leave me alone. I must finish this job,"

"You know lots of stories," Gottlieb insisted. "Just tell us one."

He stared sharply at them. "If you never bother me again, I will recite you a piece I once learned in a gymnasium."

"Oh, we recite pieces, Trummer," the boys said, familiarly, "every Friday in school."

"In my country, the gymnasium is a school for boys."

They seated themselves on a roll of leather and prepared to listen. To their utter astonishment, Trummer arose, untied his soiled apron-string and laid it aside, unrolled his shirt sleeves, buttoned the cuffs and put on his coat.

"A man must dress properly when he recites," he told the boys, by the way of an explanation. "This is a ballad about a Jewish poet. Let me explain. In olden times poets would travel from place to place, reciting their poems and singing the songs they composed. Once a year they would hold a sort of a fair, as we do

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here in Canaway, and each one would sing a song, or recite a piece, as you do in school. He who had the prettiest song, or the finest poem, received a wreath of flowers. This Jewish poet was named Susskind, and he lived in a town called Trimberg in Bavaria. Listen! I will now give you the ballad of Susskind of Trimberg. Straightening himself up, Trummer recited with gusto this ballad:

### THE TROUBADOUR JEW.

Now into the high hall the proud poets troop,  
From the tiled palace court in old Trimberg, the town,  
And with light, gallant mien the courtiers stoop  
In their bows to the dames, all of fairest renown.  
And the flicker of gaiety brightens the room,  
For it gleams like their jewels and silken brocade;  
While the clanking of swords and of stirrups consume  
Half the love-doting sallies of matron and maid.

This is an occasion when rhymers appear  
To vie in a tourney of ballad and song,  
And the revelry hushes—the Judges are here—  
Till the stillness of evening broods over the throng.  
For each bard, in his place, is awaiting his cue,  
To arouse the applause of the court and its train,  
And he hums in his heart just a stanza or two  
Of the rhymes he had wrought at the beck of his Thane.

First they called on the bard whose sweet minne-songs led,  
Many sore-footed pilgrims in quest of the grail,  
And he rises with honor, a crown on his head,  
And sings well of castle's defense and assail.  
Then to love-winning eyes of his lady he turns,  
And reverts to a knight who had led every quest  
In the siege of her heart; for whose conquest he yearns,  
As a monk yearns in prayer for the joys of the blest.



### THE TROUBADOUR JEW

*"My song is of love, that should gladden all times, and that love is the book  
of the law of my sires"*





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He ceased, and the plaudits arose to the roof,  
And around the vast hall rolled his praise and his name;  
Lifted up in his pride, from the fellows aloof,  
He gives them a challenge to mount to his fame.  
Almost heavy of heart, then the next poet sings  
The song he has woven to dazzle the court,  
Tho' deftly he wakens the musical strings,  
Till his harp and his voice in one rapture disport.

Each poet wins favor, delightfully heard;  
All the knights and ladies are brave in their praise  
Of the favorite tune, or the apt chosen word,  
In the rollicking troubadour's spirited lays.  
But now one unhearded bard is espied,  
Lately shunned with a growl by the insolent crew,  
And, stung by his daring in crossing their pride,  
They hotly demanded: "What ho! hear the Jew!"

Full proudly he arose when he thus was proclaimed,  
Good Susskind of Trimberg, the troubadour Jew;  
Standing calmly before them, unknown, unashamed,  
He would lift their disdain as the sun lifts the dew.  
But becalmed and at gaze, like a couchant wild beast,  
Ere it lept unaware on its innocent prey,  
And inwardly chafed that he came to their feast—  
Angry and silent and scornful were they.

"My song is of love, that should gladden all times,  
And that love is the book of the law of my sires.  
We have wandered with this through the seasons and climes,  
Long ago by the Rhine we enkindled our fires.  
We were here when the eagles of Rome were elate;  
We encamped amid desolate ruins and mounds.  
So of Trimberg I sing, and the woods of the state,  
Of Bavaria loved, and what in it abounds.

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"Before German was, then my fathers were here,  
And they sang of a peace that was sweeter than wine.  
With the harp that was David's, and not with the spear,  
They greeted the vales of the Saale and the Rhine.  
Oh, this land is my country, these forests my home!  
Here my altars of praise and of household were set.  
Overflowing with love of my townsmen, I come,  
Aad I offer a friendship that none shall regret.

"Give me heed now, ye bards; for like Walter I sing,  
And a troubadour's mate is a good man and just.  
All the children of men are controlled by one King,  
And He fathers the living and those in the dust.  
Your songs are of bloodshed, and bloodshed is death;  
Sing ye rather the rich who are friends to the poor.  
My songs are of peace, and have balm in their breath.  
That should soothe afflictions that many endure.

"And ye who exult in the pride of your sires,  
Ye prize not, ye heed not, the greeting I bring.  
Ye can only think scorn of my kindly desires,  
And would silence my lays when my heart bids me sing.  
Made a stranger and outcast, as are each of my folk,  
Is there aught that ye know for which I can atone?  
Must the woes of my father be also my yoke  
As I pass in and out here, scarce noticed, alone?"

But the court, in its festal and splendid array,  
Was devoid of reply, though touched to the core;  
And, seemingly deaf to his resonant lay,  
They saw him bow low and pass out of the door.  
With a heart that was sad, he strode forth from the gate  
Of the town that he loved, into woodland and glen,  
This minstrel of Judah, elected by fate  
To sing a new song to the children of men.

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O Susskind of Trimberg! O troubadour Jew!  
The harp that was David's was held in thy hand!  
And the words thou hast chanted, tho' broken and few,  
Have sustained us and cheered us in far distant lands.  
Praise for Susskind, his country beloved as his home,  
And for neighbors and kinsfolk—all people are one.  
The Father who formed us, to all does he come,  
And His blessing abides where a good deed is done.

The boys were scarcely aware he had finished the ballad, when he seated himself and, holding his face in his hands, began to moan.

"Ah, dear; my country, my country!" Trummer cried. "I shall never see my country again. I am here in America. God bless America!"

"Did you like the piece, boys?" he asked, brightening and rising from his bench. "I recited that once at home—many, many years ago."

"When we are big we will speak a long piece," Gottlieb assured him.

"That is right. Now, go downstairs."

They rose reluctantly and stood by the door, unwilling to leave. Trummer took off his coat, put on his apron, rolled up his shirt sleeves, and started to work. "What is the matter now?" he asked, seeing the boys still standing there. "Another story again? Ach, my! Leave me alone now. I must earn my living."

"We didn't say 'Thank you,' Trummer. Mamina says we must thank you whenever you tell us a story."

"Say 'Thank you, then,' and go."

When they rushed into their father's store, Lustig wondered what had happened. They were very much excited.

"Papa," Ludwig began, "Trummer recited a piece about a

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minstrel man who lived in Germany, and, papa, he didn't make one mistake, and he talked just like a teacher."

"Ach!" Lustig answered, "didn't I tell you Trummer was educated?"

Very little happened thereafter to distinguish Trummer in their eyes until he bought an accordion. This odd musical instrument gave him so much amusement that Lustig wondered what charm was to be found in it. Trummer devoted his spare time to practicing. Instead of spending the evening hours reading his newspaper in Lustig's store, he remained in his shop, playing odd tunes; sometimes airs familiar to Lustig and then some weird things which Lustig told his German friends were Polish wedding-songs.

Canaway soon became acquainted with the accordion. Late at night, especially on moonlight nights, Trummer would march down Main street towards the lake, playing the accordion as he walked. And the people of Canaway who lived on that street, as well as those in adjacent streets, hearing the soft notes floating out on the still air, would say: "There goes Trummer," and forget to talk about the music.

The accordion, however, was the beginning of the end of his stay in Canaway. He came less and less to Lustig's store; and sometimes for weeks no one would see him except on moonlight nights when he walked down the street towards the lake. But one evening this route was changed. It was now the latter part of August. The evenings were growing longer. At nightfall, while the main street was still illuminated by the lights in the store windows, Trummer commenced to play as he reached the dwelling houses on Main street. Some people who were sitting on their front porches stopped their talk to listen. Some sweet, soft air fell from the instrument, which Trummer did not vary, but played again and again. To the lake he walked, then back, and com-

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pletely around the town. All around the outskirts of Canaway he walked, playing the tune, and where he went after that nobody knows to this day.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A RURAL PURIM.

It was a father's natural desire to please his sons that led Herman Lustig to relate so many captivating tales of his birthplace, Schwersenz. He had no better means of entertaining them than to describe some peculiar person; or to relate an incident that happened in his boyhood, and the sons were always well pleased. So frequently had he referred to this hamlet in eastern Prussia, and so many incidents seemed to have occurred there, that the boys regarded it as a place enchanted, or one created for the sole purpose of affording people opportunities to do many odd and laughable things.

Their own town, Canaway, in western New York, was less romantic. In Canaway there was no street, as there was in Schwersenz, where the geese walked barefoot. There was not in Canaway a local "hobo" like Schayah, who presented himself at the rear door of wealthy residences schnorring (begging) pennies to buy his Sabbath noodle-soup. And then, what boy in Canaway dared to play so many exciting pranks as their own father had done in the Fatherland? Where were the boys to pull feathers from a bed-tick and feed them to the burgomeister's goat? There was no burgomeister (mayor) in Canaway, and had there been, no one would have been brave enough to give his goat anything less nutritious than newspapers or tin cans.

But in Schwersenz all these things were possible. At an early age boys began their pranks, and Lustig himself confessed that he celebrated his learning to walk by slipping from his mother's arms to play tick-tack on the front window of the Schammes' house.

## A RURAL PURIM

But there was no Schammes in Canaway, and the most fun the village youngsters had was on circus day and the Fourth of July.

In Schwersenz every day was a holiday—at least that was the impression Lustig gave his sons.

With a flourish of imagination he adorned every tale. Every happening in Canaway reminded him of something in his native town. A runaway recalled a similar accident, in which some intimate friend lost either a basket of Pesach (Passover) eggs, or a corn-fed goose. An Irish wedding recalled a Polish nuptial in which Leiser Lesser, the famous funmaker and the fiddler of the place, played the dance music and cracked the jokes. Little happened in this western New York town, no matter what it was, that had not already occurred in Schwersenz.

Gottlieb and Ludwig enjoyed these tales. Of all the favors they received, they appreciated most a story, and they frequently urged their father to tell them one. On a rainy Sunday afternoon, Lustig would accordingly relate some experience, enlarging or adorning it, as occasion required. But on the eve of every Jewish holiday the boys were certain to hear from their father some lively narrative connected with the festival, and they would learn how their parents celebrated the holiday in the old country.

On such evenings Lustig would remain at home, instead of going to his store, as country merchants are in the habit of doing, and he would amuse his boys by describing the religious service in his parent's home, or in the synagogue. On such occasions he was always in a merry mood. In that happy frame of mind he entered at the front door one pleasant evening in March, and called his boys, who instantly trooped to his side, and giving a hearty greeting to his wife, who was preparing supper, he said:

"Boys, tonight is Purim."

"What is Purim?" asked Ludwig.

## CANAWAY AND THE LUSTIGS

"Don't you remember the story of Queen Esther and the villain, Haman?" he asked, with feigned amazement.

"That's the time the Persians wanted to kill all the Jews, and Esther, the queen, saved them. Boys, have you forgotten the story?"

Tell us about Schwersenz," Gottlieb interrupted, not a whit interested in the Purim story.

Lustig laughed. "So Schwersenz is funnier than Purim!"

"Yes," exclaimed Ludwig. "Tell us about that fellow Schayah!"

"Oh, leave him alone," said Lustig, "when the poor man is saving his appetite for the Purim cakes."

"What did he do on Purim?" Gottlieb asked.

"Oh, that was the time Schayah stayed at home, picking the raisins out of his cakes," Lustig told them, seating himself at the head of the table. "Purim was made for boys, and that was the time we had our fun."

They gazed at him expectantly.

"Tell us what you did," they begged.

"Well, we boys used to dress up and go masquerading from house to house, making the people guess our names. At every place we went they gave us something. We used to go to the rich ones first. They always gave us a penny. Then we went to the others, and they would hand cakes to us, just like those that mamma bakes—Purim cakes, with raisins and almonds in them. I never ate any cake that tasted so sweet, and the raisins—but they have no such raisins these days!"

The boys listened open-mouthed, but his wife understood well enough his reference to the poverty of East Prussian towns.

"Did you do anything?" asked Gottlieb, mysteriously, unmoved by his father's thoughtful look.

"Why, we sang and danced," Lustig answered. First we



## A RURAL PURIM

knocked on the front door, giving it such a bang that you would think we were trying to break it. To whomever came to the door we would sing:

" 'Come, good people, and open the door!  
Open it wider than ever before!  
Today is Purim, tomorrow it's done;  
Give us a gift, and away we run!' "

"Did you really sing that?" the boys asked, timidly.

"Sing it!" echoed their father: "we shouted it! We yelled it so loudly that all the house heard us, and ran to the door. In we would rush, scatter about the room, and everyone there would try to guess who we were.

" 'That's Wolff Lustig's boy,' one would say.

" 'Nope!' I would shout; 'it isn't Lustig's son. Guess again.'

" 'Then Gabriel Lesser, the glazier's son.'

" 'Nope!' said Adolph Rich.

"Then they said I was Moishe Hertz, Mendel Lesser, Jacob Harris, Moritz Lazarus, and named other boys of the town. Of course, we wouldn't tell, and the more they guessed the louder we sang:

" 'Guess, good people, guess again;  
Perhaps you'll name us if you can;  
Today is Purim, tomorrow it's done;  
Give us a gift, and away we run.' "

Gottlieb and Ludwig were so absorbed in this story, and Ludwig himself was so animated, that the victuals cooled on their plates.

"After that, what would you do?" asked the boys.

"If they couldn't guess, we would join hands and circle about

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the room, kicking and jumping, scaring girls by sticking out our tongues at them. Then I would dance a jig. 'Aha!' they would say; 'that's Wolff Lustig's son. He's the only mischief-maker in Schwersenz who can dance like that!'

"I would laugh and tell them to guess again.

"'Oh, that's he. I know his voice,' Rosalie Lesser would say.

"That's mamma!" both boys exclaimed overwhelmed by the discovery that, once upon a time, their mother was a girl.

Husband and wife exchanged glances, and Lustig added: "One night, boys, we went Pruim-pranking, and the towncrier—that's the night watchman, or policeman, as we call him here—found us. 'Hey!' he cried; 'what are you boys doing at this hour of the night?'"

"'It's Purim!' we cried.

"'Purim?' he shouted back to us. 'Some more of your Jewish nonsense?'

'Oh, go 'long with you,' we answered back, and ran away. But he followed us. 'Go home!' he shouted; 'go home!'

"'Catch us going home,' we yelled back; and away we rushed to the River Wartha."

Lustig paused awhile. It was evident to his wife that he intended to relate a thrilling story. Bowing her head, she concealed her smiles behind her hand. Then Lustig continued:

"We were now on the river bank, and I tell you it was cold; but we didn't mind that. The policeman was after us, If we turned back, he would catch us, and put us in jail. If we ran any further we would probably fall into the river. What were we to do?

The boys waited with mouths open.

Suddenly Jake Harris shouted. 'Here's a boat. Let's sail down the river! We didn't say another word but jumped into the boat and pushed off, just in time. The policeman stood on the

## A RURAL PURIM

shore, calling after us: "Is this some more of your Purim nonsense?"

"We didn't mind him. Out on the river we floated. It was a dark night, and we began to be afraid. But we had lots of fun sailing away from the place. There were a few nearby lights, but these faded away, and we were gliding along between dark, empty fields. Now and then a dog barked. The sound was like that of a fog horn. None of us spoke, and we didn't know where we were going. Some said we would sail into Posen; others that, if we stayed in the boat long enough, we would reach America. But, after a while, one of us saw in the distance a little light, very near the bank, just as if I took a candle and stuck it in the ground.

" 'Let's go there,' said one of the boys.

"We pushed in to the shore; jumped out of the boat, and tried to find the house. We couldn't. But there was the light, shining up through the ground, and we knew some one must be near.

" 'Let's sing our Purim song!' I said.

"Well, the boys were so scared they were ready to do anything, and we sang.

" 'Come, good people, open the door,  
Open it wider than ever before,  
Today is Purim, tomorrow it's done  
Give us a gift and away we run! ' "

"Well, sir, we shouted it louder than ever; and, just as we finished I never saw anything like it in my life, the ground seemed to open, and a man stuck his head out of a big hole.

" 'Who are you?' he shouted to us.

" 'Purim! Purim!' we yelled back, half scared out of our wits.

" 'O, ho,' roared the fellow, 'you're Schwersenz boys come to serenade us. Welcome, welcome!'

"I never was so tickled in all my days. We went down a

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little ladder into a cave; but it was fitted up just like a room, with chairs, table, and an old-fashioned stove. When they saw us, the man and his wife began to laugh and clap their hands, and the old fellow roared.

"'O, ho, you're Schwersenz boys come to serenade us on Purim. What can you do?'

"I tell you, they were pleased to see us; and, just as we started to sing, the woman said: 'Sing one of your Purim songs, boys. This is your Jewish Purim. I know what Jews do. I used to work for the Goldschmit's in Posen.'

"We weren't a bit afraid now. We danced and sang, and I gave my jig, and the man took a turn. He whirled us around the room, sang a song and danced so hard that the wooden floor began to shake, and I thought the roof would tumble in on us. He could sing, that fellow could, and this is his song:

"'Hearken, you villagers, to this tale:  
A cow once stole a milkman's pail;  
She frightened the townsfolk out of their lives,  
By selling milk to the townsmen's wives.' "

"Here Lustig laughed at his own attempt at rhyme, but the boys, impatient for the rest of the story, cried out: 'What happened then?'

"'Happened?'" Lustig repeated merrily. "The man and his wife gave us some of the good things they had in the pantry. We had doughnuts, summer sausage, fried meats, and everything of that sort. We took all they gave us, but were afraid to eat. We held it in our hands, but did not stir. When the old man saw that we were merely holding the cakes, he said: 'Why don't you boys eat? You never tasted anything so good.'

"'Dasn't,' we said, not caring to explain.

## A RURAL PURIM

"Do you Schwersenz boys come here at midnight and refuse to eat my Sunday pastries? Dasn't! Dasn't!"

"We couldn't say another word, we were so frightened, and Mendel Lesser began to cry. 'Hey, there,' said the fellow, roaring at us:

"What's the trouble with you, crying in my house? Why don't you eat?"

"Not Kosher!" we yelled, and tumbled out of the house as fast as we could."

"It took Lustig several minutes to assure the boys that he and his companions reached home in safety; crept into their respective houses unseen and unheard; and found their trundle-beds in the attics and were soon buried in deep sleep.

The supper finished, Lustig noticed a whispered conference going on between the boys, and, finally, persuaded them to take him into their confidence. "We want to celebrate Purim, too," they said.

"Oh," Lustig returned jovially, "one must live among Jewish people to play a Purim prank. We are the only Jewish people in Canaway. Where can you go? No one would understand what you meant."

"Mrs. Ashley would," they said.

Without attempting to dissuade, and not wishing to disappoint them, Lustig began to plan a disguise, and prepare them for the frolic.

"Ludwig," he called merrily, "put on my old fireman's suit; and Gottlieb, I will dress you up in one of mamma's old-fashioned hoop skirts. Then go over to Mrs. Ashley's, knock at the front door, and when you are in her front parlor, sing this song:

"Haman fed his little pigs on sassafrass and gingers.  
And when he tried to catch them all,  
They slipped right through his fingers."

## CANAWAY AND THE LUSTIGS

The boys were soon disguised, and then left the house—father and mother anxiously awaiting their return, both wondering as to what the result of the adventure would be. At last the lads came back, both of them munching a huge slice of mince pie; their disguise partly revealed, their clothes being sadly disarranged. Gottlieb had become disentangled from his skirt, and Ludwig's coat and trousers, miles too big, had been removed. The hemlet alone remained, and that so completely covered his head, that the mince pie, rather than his face, was visible.

"Well, what happened?" Lustig demanded impatiently.

"Well," Ludwig began, closely imitating his father's manner  
"we went to Mrs. Ashley's, you know, to the front door."

"I rang the bell," Gottlieb interrupted.

"Mrs. Ashley came to the front door with her lamp," Ludwig continued.

"'Mercy sakes,' she said, 'what's this?' Then we sang:

"Today is Purim, tomorrow it's done;  
Give us a gift and away we run."

"'Bless me, it's Ludwig and Gottlieb,' she said.

"'You musn't know us, Mrs. Ashley,' I told her. It's Purim.

"'O, I mustn't?' she answered, 'but I do know your voices.  
What makes you wear those funny clothes and masks?'

"'It's Purim,' I told her. We must come into the parlour and dance for you, and then you must give us something.'

"Well, we went into the front room, They haven't a fire there in winter, so she took us into the dining room, where Mr. Ashley was. He laughed at what we said, and made us dance lively. I never danced so much. Then Mrs. Ashley, she asked us what we wanted, and we told her."

"'Purim, you say; is that the time you eat your Matzoth?' she said.

## A RURAL PURIM

"'No, we sing and dance, and then you give us something to eat.'

"'I havn't anything but mince pie?' And so she gave us a big piece of mince pie, and we began to eat it. But Mr. Ashley made us take off our masks and the clothes you put on, so we wouldn't catch cold when we went out."

"Well, boys," Lustig cried with a burst of laughter, "did you have a good time?"

The boys were slow to confess. Finally Ludwig said: "No, we didn't. If we lived in Schwersenz, we would have a better time—we could run away down the river in a boat, as you did."

## CHAPTER V.

### Elijah, The Prophet, in Canaway.

At some time or another something unusual was sure to happen in Canaway. A circus next summer, or a fire last autumn, or any similiar event was sufficient to keep the townsfolk gossiping.

Herman Lustig was no exception. He often told his boys to expect some surprising occurence. They, too, like all good people of Canaway, were looking ahead or looking backward. Lustig predicted so many things for his boys and assured them that within the ensuing year many startling events would take place in Canaway; that, were a tenth part to come true, the boys would be on the way to become either millionaires or president of the United States.

This was characteristic of the town. And it was quite natural for Lustig to promise his sons a party or a merry celebration in honor of an approaching Jewish holiday. When the ice broke up on the lake, and the March winds blew hot and cold alternately, when the snow and ice had melted and spring was at hand, one might have overheard Lustig promising his boys a Seder festival.

It would be a rare treat, so he led them to believe. He intended to celebrate it in somewhat the same fashion that his good father had in the old Schwarsenzer home. And, inasmuch as it was something to look forward to, the boys accepted the promise with good grace and waited.

They suspected, however, that something unusual would take place. For several days their mother, assisted by Mary O'Brien, the housemaid, had cleaned and scoured; all the familiar



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broken-edged dishes were removed from the pantry; new oiled paper lined the closet shelves; the flour barrel was emptied; and the boys made a barn fire in the back yard of the crumbs from the cake box. All this betokened something unusual; and their spirits were raised to a high pitch.

At the end of a long house-cleaning campaign, Mrs. Lustig concluded that her domicile was thoroughly renovated; and, one evening, when Herman Lustig returned from his store, he called his sons to his side and announced cheerfully:

"Boys, tonight is 'Seder!' "

"Oh! is that something to eat?" asked Ludwig.

"It's something to eat," Lustig admitted gayly; "but then, it's the way we eat it that makes 'Seder.'"

"Oh, I know! It's a party," Gottlieb suggested enthusiastically.

"Well, then it is a party," Lustig conceded, greatly amused at the boys' conjectures.

"Can't we invite somebody?" Gottlieb appealingly asked.

"I will do that. Wait, and you will hear me invite Elijah, the Prophet."

Forestalling their inquiries, he added: "I will tell you about him. He is a funny man; and we musn't talk about him till it's time to send the invitation. Then perhaps, he may accept."

"Oh, I don't mean that!" Ludwig explained. "I mean some one we know."

"I might have invited Father Margoli, eh, boys?" He paused to see the effect; but they were perplexed. "Do you know," he added frankly, "I think the priest is a Jew."

But this observation did not impress them. They listened attentively, watching his alternating grimaces, and then Ludwig added:

"Isn't he coming?"

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"Well, I don't know," Lustig added dubiously. "He was in the store this afternoon with Father English; and they arranged to rent my carpet loft until St. Mary's is rebuilt. I wanted to let them have it free of charge, but they insisted on paying it. 'Tis better to be good friends with everyone, even if I am a Jew, and they are Catholics. Be good friends with everyone, boys, and you'll get along in this world. No one in Canaway wanted to rent rooms to them, so they came to me. 'Take mine' I said, and they rented them. So there you are."

He laughed, but the boys did not appreciate the significance of a Catholic service in a Jewish merchant's store.

"Then we can go up there?" Ludwig said innocently.

"That's no place for you."

"Oh, I want to see the new priest!"

"Some day, when you come to the store, you will meet him. He comes into my place quite often. He's a nice young fellow, and he knows many things about the Jewish people; because, whenever I mention anything about our religion, he appears to know all about it. Why, this morning when he came with Father English he asked me:

"Isn't this your Pesach?" just like that.

"Yes, I said. 'How do you know?'"

"'Studied it,' he said. And do you give Seder?"

"How do you know anything about Seder?" I asked him again.

"'Studied it,' he said, just like that, and then we laughed.

"Say, Father, how do you know so much about the Jews?" You seem to know more about them than you do about the Irish."

"Well, sir, you should have heard them laugh. And Father English said:

"Why, the Jews and the Irish are the chosen people!" And then we all laughed.

"Oh, well," said Father Margoli, "I like the Jewish people,"

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and he looked me in the eye, as if he wanted to say, 'I am a Jew, don't you know it? Well, sir, I thought of taking him aside and questioning him, but Father English was there and I couldn't. So I just told the young priest I was going to give a Seder tonight and invited him.

"Even then, he continued to ask questions. He wanted to know whether we had a Hagadah (that's the name of the book from which the service is read); and whether my youngest son would ask why this night was distinguished from all other nights in the year.

"How do you know about that? I inquired. Only Jews know these things.

"He wanted to tell me, I know it. I saw him blush and drop his eyes, as if he would like to let the cat out of the bag. But Father English noticed it and drew away. He may come, anyhow."

Ludwig and Gottlieb appeared to be interested in what their father was telling them; but when their mother broke in and said that she was ready, they seated themselves at the table, and, overcome by the revelation of the dishes and the odd arrangement of the plates, forgot all about the priest.

Aided by what little information Lustig obtained in the sad years he attended the Schwersenz Cheder (Hebrew school), he explained the meaning and significance of the Seder, and then retold the story of the passing of the children of Israel from the house of bondage to the promised land; of their suffering in days of old and their yearning for freedom. And when the boys wearied of the talk, he wakened their interest by explaining the purpose of the burnt meat, the bitter herbs, the sweetmeats, and, finally, the unleavened bread. They listened attentively, watched the distribution of the various portions of food, and repeated after their father the blessing over the wine. Lustig was explaining the

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symbols and usages of the evening, when Ludwig interrupted him by asking when that funny man would come.

"Yes, papa," Gottlieb echoed, "tell us about Elijah, the funny man of whom you spoke."

"He doesn't come, boys, unless he is invited. Didn't you hear me read; 'come all who are hungry and eat. All you who are thirsty, come in and drink. This year we are all in bondage; next year we are free men. This year we are here; next year—he paused, lowered his head and seemed puzzled—well, next year, boys," he concluded, "we may not be here!"

They stared at him. There was something mysterious about it all.

Lustig foresaw how they might feel. "You know, boys," he explained, "the Jews used to be driven from country to country. No one wanted to make friends with them. You don't know what that means, because you live in a land of freedom. But suppose Mrs. Ashley were to come over here, or Henry Mutschler the butcher, or Pat Meade and his boys, or anyone on Bristol street—suppose they would come over here and say, 'Get out of here! You are Jews! You don't belong here! Get out, or we will burn your house and steal your furniture and dishes! This is not your country. You don't belong here!'"

The boys looked very grave.

"That's what happened to our fathers in olden times," Lustig continued. "They had no home. They were driven from every town they settled in. Either king or prince or priest made them go; and they had to seek homes elsewhere.

"Did Elijah go along?" Ludwig asked plaintively.

"Wherever they went," Lustig said, "Elijah followed them. If they lost their way, he pointed out the right road. When they came to a strange city and were unable to make themselves under-

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stood he taught them the language of its people. Whenever there was any danger ahead, he warned his people in time."

"What was his business?" Gottlieb asked.

"Traveler," Lustig answered. "Just a traveler. He traveled all over the world. In those days there were no railroads; so men used to walk, or ride on horseback.

"What did he look like?" Ludwig inquired.

"Look like? Oh, he looked," Lustig answered "like an old man with a great big white beard and long white hair; and he wore an immense overcoat. Well, sir, whenever he was on the highway, that's the country road, and he saw another man ahead, he would run up to him and keep him company. So, one day, he met a man on the highway and they walked together, talking about all sorts of things. They stopped for dinner at a farmer's house. The peasants were poor, but they treated Elijah and his friend to a good dinner. When Elijah and his friend left, Elijah saw the farmer's only cow in the field and killed it.

"Elijah's companion was indignant at this. 'What!' he cried at him. 'These poor people have given you a fine dinner, and you return their kindness by killing their cow?'

"'Don't you know,' said Elijah, 'who I am? I am Elijah, the Prophet. I knew that the farmer's wife would die. So I caused the cow to die in her stead.'"

"Could he do that?" the boys asked incredulously.

"Oh, yes! He was a great man. He could do wonderful things. One day he met another traveler on the road, and they wished to take supper at a rich man's house. But he sent them away; and they had to sleep in the fields without food or bed. In the morning Elijah noticed that a part of the man's house had tumbled in, and he immediately went and fixed it up without difficulty.

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" 'What!' said his friend. 'You return good for evil? That man drove us away and now you restore the wall of his house?'

" 'Tut, tut!' said Elijah, laughing at the man. 'You don't know who I am. Under the wall of the house is a box of money, and, if that man had rebuilt his own wall, he would have found the treasure. So I rebuilt it, and no one will find the box of gold.' "

All this was marvelous in the lads' eyes, and they urged Lustig to continue.

"Well, sir, Elijah was good to the poor. If he met a man on the road who was hungry, he gave him something to eat. If a working man came to him and told him he had injured his arm or his leg and was unable to work, Elijah would take his job and give him the wages. And, boys, do you know that if the school children couldn't get their 'rithmetic lesson, and they called on Elijah to help them, he did so at once, and they could pass their examinations."

"Did he go all over?" Gottlieb asked.

"Everywhere. Whenever people were in trouble he came to them and helped them. He was everybody's friend. Why, boys, that man could make friends with a clown in a circus! Do you like clowns, boys?"

"Yes!" they both exclaimed at once.

"So did Elijah. One day he came into town and saw a clown giving a show in the street. In those days they used to have their own circus in the streets and not in the tents like Barnum's. When Elijah saw the clown, he went up to him, shook him by the hand, and slapped him on the back just as an old friend might do. 'I like you', Elijah said to the clown. 'You make people laugh so that they forget their troubles. You are a good man.' And then he told the clown the story of the one-legged goose.

"Whats' that?" they asked in a chorus. / "

"Well, once upon a time a rich man gave a banquet, and

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ordered his cook to roast a goose. Ah, boys, roast goose is fine! So the cook killed the fattest goose, roasting it brown, and when he drew it from the oven it smelt so appetizing that his mouth watered. He broke off a leg, turned the goose over so that one could see only the other leg, and at dinner placed it before his master, who was to carve it. 'See here!' said the master to his cook, after he had begun the carving, 'some one has broken a leg off this goose!' 'Geese have only one leg,' said the servant, shaking in his boots. No one believed him. But that same afternoon, while he was driving the company to their homes, they passed by a farmyard where the geese were standing on a log with one leg under their wing. 'See there,' said the servant, didn't I tell you geese have only one leg?'

"Oh, how the clown laughed when Elijah ended the story! You could have heard him from far away. So whenever there's a party in a Jewish home, they invite Elijah just to tell stories and make them happy. Everybody keeps an empty chair and plate for Elijah. Of course, he can't go everywhere at the same time, but we leave an empty place always in his honor.

"Would he come here?" Gottlieb timidly inquired.

"He might. He's traveled all over the world, visiting Jews in every clime. And wherever he goes he gives something to the poor; tells some of his funny stories; plays with little boys and girls; sings a song, dances or plays marbles, and then disappears. Everybody looks forward to his visits, and everybody invites him."

"You haven't invited him yet," Ludwig broke in.

"That's so. Let's invite him, then. Elijah! Oh, Mr. Elijah!" Lustig called aloud, Ludwig and Gottlieb invite you to attend their Seder. If you're in town, call on Lustigs on Bristol street."

"Will he come?" they asked skeptically.

"I will call again. Elijah, are you coming?"

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The sudden ringing of the door bell lent a moment's awe to the merriment. Lustig stopped, and threw a frightened look at his wife, whose cheeks turned as pale as those of her boys. Ludwig and Gottlieb's hearts throbbed, and they prepared for a miracle. When Lustig arose, however, they dared not turn their heads to see what sort of a personage their father would usher into the dining-room. Crouching in their chairs, with their hearts a-throb, they waited, fearful of their father's fate, marveling at the odd coincidence, and then wondering, despite its apparent impossibility, whether Elijah would really visit them.

Their father's hearty laughter, ringing cheerily back to the silent household, relieved them. "This isn't Elijah, boys," he said as he brought a young priest into the dining-room. "This is Father Margoli."

The priest bowed ceremoniously to Mrs. Lustig, and smiled in a friendly manner at the boys, who stared at him, more disappointed than they could say.

The priest and Lustig fell to talking, and the boys attempted to follow their conversation, but it referred to things beyond their knowledge. So they inspected the visitor, noting his high-cut clerical vest and the smooth lines of his face. But the far away look in his eyes and the shadow of regret and sadness encircling his deep-sunk hollow eyes, made no impression on them.

It amused them to see with what ease their father spoke to him; how familiarly he addressed him. They knew he was talking about the Seder, because he pointed to the meat and matzoh and reread pages from the Hagadah at the priest's request, and finally both, to their utter astonishment, joined in singing the monotonous, but tuneful song of Hadgadyah.

It was a pleasant feast. The boys seemed to have been forgotten, and had they not compelled attention by resampling portions of the edibles and requesting their father to fill their wine-



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glasses, they might have fallen asleep without witnessing the most impressive scene of their young lives.

"You see, the Jews," Lustig was saying, "believe in making life happy. They believe in having a good time in a proper way; they believe that life's worth living. They like family life, children, and a wife who can make good matzohschalet."

Mrs. Lustig appreciated the compliment graciously.

"That's what we like. We believe in all good things and all good people."

The priest acknowledged Lustig's general statement with a nod of approval.

"That's why the Jews have families—so that children may learn to know what it means to honor their parents, that they may live long in the land."

The priest dropped his head and murmured a low assent.

"We always stick together. Good heavens! Had we not stuck together, what would have become of us? Jews wish to help one another. I tell you, if any Jewish boy despised his father—"

"Impossible!" interrupted the priest. "That's rather strong." Lustig stared at him open-eyed.

"What's the matter, Father?"

"Nothing, sir, nothing. Continue."

"You know we Jews believe in freedom. So we have great sympathy for those who are enslaved—people who cannot do as they think best, who must sell their souls, who haven't the right to be men and women, but must do as others tell them to do, although the others don't believe it themselves."

"Who told you so?" asked the priest, his eyes aflame.

"Told?" No one told me! Won't you have another glass of wine, Father?"

Lustig filled his own glass, and exchanged serious glances

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with his wife. They saw the glass tremble in the young priest's hand. He swallowed the contents in one nervous gulp.

"You see, Father, no one understands the Jews."

"I do—yes, yes, I know them!" the priest exclaimed.

"That's true, and that puzzles me," Lustig returned, "I believe you know more about the Jews than I do."

"No, no! Father Margoli protested. "I have only studied them superficially. I saw—the little my father would—but continue, Mr. Lustig, continue. I am rather excited. This Seder festival—why, it reminds me of so many things. It is supposed to be the origin—but never mind me, I am curious, you see; rather unfit for company. Continue."

"I think Father," said Lustig, "almost every nation must hate the Jew because they believe in freedom. Jews hate kings, princes and rulers. They want people to do their own thinking, and rule themselves. And that's what every sensible American wants. I am proud of being a Jew, and I should think that any man that had Jewish blood in his veins—

"Well, what of him?" interrupted the priest in a hollow voice. "What of him?"

"Why," Lustig replied blandly, "I should think he would cherish every drop of Jewish blood he had in his veins, and call himself the most fortunate man on earth."

"I am! I am!" the priest exclaimed, rising. "I am that fortunate!"

He had risen, and Lustig, astonished at this also sprang up from his chair.

"For God's sake, Father, what's the matter with you?" Lustig demanded. "What's the trouble?"

The priest paused a second, as if controlling his feelings with an effort; his brows contracted and his dark eyes flashed.

"Oh, sir, you don't know!" he moaned. "I dare not tell. I

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dare not! My heart is broken. I do not know what to say. I have dwelt in two worlds. I am your brother, but, odd as it may seem, I cannot reveal what I know. Some day I may be able to explain. Excuse me now, I must leave you. Good night!"

"That was not Elijah, boys," Lustig lugubriously informed them when the priest had gone. "No, no! Elijah would have told us, if he had any Jewish blood in his veins. He would have boasted of it. However, this much is plain, Father Margoli is a Jew."

And the boys believed it, too, after what they had seen and heard on that memorable Seder eve.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CONFIRMATION DAY.

What greater pleasure can boys have than a railroad journey? So thought the Lustig boys, and, from time to time, their desires were gratified. There were, of course, many ways of amusing one's self at every season of the year in Canaway. In winter, skating on the lake and sleigh-riding; in autumn, nutting; and to hunt sassafras roots and slippery elm bark in spring, was rare fun. During the long vacation days of July and August what couldn't one do? Berryng and hiding from the gypsies were only a few of the amusements; and, of these, the Lustig boys had their share. But there was, none the less, one supreme joy—a trip to Rochester, the great city, far, far away from Canaway.

Whenever Herman Lustig allowed his boys to accompany him, both Ludwig and Gottlieb remained awake all night; for fear they might miss the eight forty-five train. Such a thing would have seemed to them like a calamity. So many wonderful things were to be seen in Rochester. Such as street cars and tall buildings of four or more stories in height; immense show windows exhibiting innumerable articles of beauty and utility. And then the people! Where did so many come from? Never, not even on circus day, was half as great a number on Main street of Canaway as there was on one side street of Rochester. It seemed as if all the men and women in the world lived in Rochester, and walked up and down Main Street, just to see the Lustigs from Canaway.

Oh, what excitement reigned in the Lustig household on the morning of the journey! With what care their Schabbus clothes

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were put on; what a sumptuous breakfast was served, and then a luncheon had to be put up, lest the boys find themselves hungry at the end of the hour's travel. After hearing for the hundredth time the many entreaties of their solicitous mother "not to go too near the street cars, not to cross the streets alone, not to get lost and not to eat too many peanuts," they started out. How proudly they walked down Bristol Street, and with what a triumphant air they told every boy they met that they were going to the City.

That was indeed a special occasion. Everything appeared to be arranged for them. On came the Elmira Express, steaming alongside the depot just to carry them to Rochester. Some passengers alighted and some boarded the train. Charlie Gluck, the conductor, called louder than ever, "All aboard!" when he saw the Lustig boys were going on the train.

Everybody in Canaway heard the eight-forty-five leave, and every one knew that the Lustig boys were on it. Slowly it moved along the park that fronts the Canaway House; then across Main Street, with its swift panoramic view of the lower Main Street, and its glimpses of the lake; faster now around the bend at the Town Hall; past the graveyard, the meadows and McKecknie's Brewery; on faster and faster, like a March wind, as it rushes through the fringe of the town, out into the country, fairly flying past houses and barns, through fields, through gullies and cuts, past Paddleford and Farmington, Victor, and Fishers, and then, the great throb of joy—the wide expanse of tracks at East Rochester, the streets and rows of houses, the great factory buildings.

Herman set the boys a jumping round the room, one evening in May, by saying he intended to take them to Rochester the following day to see a confirmation in the Reform Temple. They began to wave their hands and cry aloud in boyish delight before he had an opportunity to explain his purpose.

What cared they for his explanations? The pleasure of see-

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ing the city crowded out every other consideration. "I want to show you how Jewish children are confirmed," he said, despite their hilarity.

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" Ludwig was shouting, and Gottlieb who echoed his every syllable, was marching noisily behind him.

Lustig permitted them to vent their enthusiasm, and, after they had calmed down, told them that the oldest daughter of one of his playmates was to be confirmed, and he wanted them to see her as well as the ceremony. "We are Jewish people, you know. Even if we do live in a country town, we musn't forget that we are Jews."

It was a tedious night for them. The intervening hours between sunset and daylight seemed like a century. But when the day dawned, and the young, ruddy sunlight tinted the Bristol and sparkled on the lake, the boys, flushed with excitement and expectancy, were comfortably seated in the plush seats of the day-coach, and were flying on to the city. It was an important event; and when they stepped from the car and followed the speedy steps of their father, and heard the hotel criers calling, "Whitcomb House, Osborne House, Powers Hotel," they considered themselves very important beings. Here indeed, they were in the city, and everything wonderful stretched before them. But they now had no time to lose in sight seeing.

They were to have a new experience. They had never been in a Jewish synagogue. They had seen the inside of the churches in Canaway and once Lustig permitted them to accompany Charlie Ashley to Sunday School. Now they were to enter what they called "their own church," and they were eager to be there and see what it was like.

A large crowd of fashionably-dressed men and women were hurrying toward the temple on St. Paul Street, as the Lustig boys

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came tripping along, both of them holding tightly to their father's hand. Many persons were entering the Temple.

"Come," Lustig said softly, as he caught the organ strains floating out on the busy streets, "we are just in time."

So crowded were the seats and aisles, that with difficulty Lustig was ushered to his own pew in the gallery.

"Keep your eyes open, boys," he advised, as soon as they had squeezed into the seat, "and you will see some fine girls and boys." But he had hardly finished his remark when the organ pealed forth a slow, solemn march and every one about then craned his neck to watch the procession. As the soft, solemn tones floated from the large musical instrument, the boys, looking over the edge of the gallery, saw a pale man of medium height leading a procession of young girls, all dressed in white, their eyes fastened on the bouquets they had in their hands. They marched down the middle aisle. Slowly, and with measured steps, they advanced. All eyes were turned toward them as they moved along almost imperceptibly. Following them came the boys, less impressed by the solemnity of the occasion than were the girls—for they looked about, trying to obtain recognition from relatives in the audience.

The girls were now finding their seats on the platform, behind palms and banks of potted flowers, and the boys, too, were filling the camp chairs. The tallest boy, in his first long trousers, was stepping alertly upon the platform, and the great organ's tones were subdued, when Lustig, his eyes filled with tears, sought the attentive faces of his boys.

"You'll be doing that some day," he whispered, "if you are spared to us."

"Are they confirmed now?" Gottlieb ventured to ask in a whisper.

"Hush," Lustig cautioned, "we mustn't speak or whisper in Schule."

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"When are they confirmed?" Ludwig persisted.

"You will see," his father returned firmly. The congregation had risen at the sonorous reading of a Hebrew sentence. The pale, nervous man in the pulpit was repeating in the same language some words which the boys could not understand; and, in a full, melodious chant, the choir responded; then, amid the rustling of skirts and the scraping of feet, the congregation reseated itself.

The reading continued. The instant the boys heard the words, they began questioning their father. "Who is that man?" Gottlieb asked quietly.

"Hush! Lustig answered, turning on them a commanding look, "you mustn't whisper! The man 'dosen't like it. He's a Jewish minister, a rabbi, Dr. Hillman, a very learned man. Some days, boys, you will study under him. Now listen!"

The boys found it difficult to comply with their father's request. There were so many interesting and strange sights that they wished to inquire about. It was all very new; and yet, somehow, they did not feel out of place, as they did when they sat, partly scared and very shy, in Charlie Ashley's Sunday school. To be sure, they did not know why their father turned the pages of a book that an usher brought him, why and what he murmured aloud, and why, sometimes, he arose and repeated after the Rabbi, words that they did not understand. But they sat contentedly, noting everything, looking down on the even rows of men and women, then up to the blue ceiling, dotted with its gilt stars. And when they tired of that, their eyes centered on the platform, where the boys and girls sat quietly reading the ritual. Although it was the first time they had been inside of a Jewish Temple, it seemed to them somehow that they had been there before; at any rate, so vividly had their father described the synagogue in Schwersenz, that they felt at home here. What astonished them more than the building and the service, was the size of the congregation. Where did so many Jewish



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people come from? Could it be that there were, all told, so many Jews in the world?

Not until one of the boys on the platform arose from his seat and began to speak did the young Lustig annoy their father with another question.

"Is he going to recite a piece?" Ludwig asked, recalling a similar public school experience.

"Watch, now boys; that's Leopold Garson's son. Some day you will stand up there and speak, too. Every Jewish boy must make a little speech in the Temple; that makes a man of him."

The confirmant's voice, owing to his diffidence probably seemed to be weak or cracked, and the Lustigs did not, at first, understand all he said. Later they made out somethings, especially when, in a strong clear tone, he thanked his parents for all the care and kindness with which they had guarded his young, helpless years—thanked his teachers for the many useful lessons he had received, and now, "he hoped to grow up into useful manhood, an honor to his parents, his country and his religion."

The address was brief—but they had never heard anyone speak quite in that way, and they felt proud of what they had heard. With an approving eye, Ludwig turned to his father and whispered, "I want to do that some day."

"Of course you do—some day when you are Bar-mitzvah."

"What's next?" Gottlieb interrupted, impatient of delays.

When their eyes fell on the platform, they saw a little girl standing before the altar, her eyes uplifted and she was saying that she had "reached an epoch in her young life," which statement was followed by many fine expressions. But the Lustigs were not so much interested in her. They never liked to hear girls speak anyway. Girls rarely recited as well as boys, and then this girl lifted her eyes up and never looked at anyone. Boys looked right at people.

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The many addresses and prayers began to weary the young Lustigs. They shifted restlessly in their seats and annoyed their father with needless questions. He, too, showed his impatience by taking out his watch and saying: "I wonder when Dora will speak?"

She was late to rise. No sooner had she stood up than Lustig forgetful of his sons, leaned further over, craning his neck, fastening his eyes on her, so that he might not lose a syllable or gesture.

"Is that our Dora?" Gottlieb ventured to ask.

"Zelig Holtsman's daughter. Her father was my classmate. Listen to her!"

The boys wondered what made their father blush; why his eyes grew big and tearful, as he heard her trembling tones; and, when she referred to her own father, "so soon called from earth," they saw tears roll down Lustig's cheeks and noticed that some woman in back of them began to cry aloud.

They could not understand what this meant. But they heard Miss Holtsman say; "May He keep his guardian watch over me," and then she suddenly stopped speaking and burst into tears.

"Poor Dora," Lustig murmured, deeply moved.

For an instant the boys stared at their father in bewilderment, and then, unable to fathom it all, glanced carelessly toward the young girl, who stood facing the congregation and sobbing.

The Rabbi waited a little, and, when the hush of the sympathetic audience grew more evident, he stepped to the girl's side, patted her gently, to encourage her, and then said to the congregation: "Be patient with her; this is a trying ordeal."

His words either stimulated or nettled her. Raising her head suddenly, she stepped forward and, as if she had not been interrupted, said bravely:

"May, from this heavenly height, my father, look down upon me this great day of my young life. May his memory burn ever

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brighter and brighter, and, although on the long way I must go alone, may it be for me a cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night. Thou, who are the father of the fearless, protect and guard me in all my ways. Bless those who guided me in childhood; and now that I step forward into girlhood, be Thou with me still. Bless my teachers, and all those who have so sincerely directed me; my many friends, and all those who have befriended me; and my sisters and brothers, who with me suffered the loss of childhood's stay and staff. Strengthen me to be father and mother to them—so that they may never know the loneliness of a homeless child. Bless this congregation and the dear Rabbi who ministers here; and the officers and all its members. O, give me the heart to know Thy ways, that in Thee I may find strength and peace within the gates of life. Amen."

So fervently had she spoken that the Rabbi clasped her hand and drew her toward him. By reason of the hum and buzz and the nodding of heads among the people below and about them, the boys realized that something unusual had taken place. And then there was the one indisputable evidence that their father had been weeping in his vigorous using of his handkerchief.

Lustig dried his eyes before he turned to his sons.

"Wasn't that fine, boys?" he said, happily. "Poor Dora is an orphan. I feared she would break down. But she outdid them all. She is a bright young girl."

He nudged Ludwig and Gottlieb, who sat one on each side of him. The class had now encircled the Rabbi, and were repeating the blessings which come before the reading of the scroll. Then the confirmants all read from the Book of Law (just as once upon a time Ludwig himself had read from it) they were now considered sons of the covenant. Although the ceremony was veiled in mystery and to Ludwig and Gottlieb unintelligible, it interested them to hear the boys read Hebrew and pronounce the blessing. No boys

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in Canaway were able to do that; and it filled them with pride to feel assured that some day they, too, would stand on the platform as their father told them, and pronounce those words.

With interest they watched each move of the Rabbi and the confirmants while he rolled the scroll together, and, covering it with a silk hood, placed the silver pointer and shield over it. Then he, turning to the class, said:

"On this day, my children, you testify before God and man that you are members of Israel's holy covenant. Do you promise to fulfil to the best of your ability, all the responsibilities that follow from that declaration?"

The Rabbi, as well as the Lustig boys, waited patiently for the answer. In a low, solemn voice the entire class responded:

"We confess this before Thee, this day, O God and God of our Fathers, that Thou art the shield of our lives, our preserver and redeemer. From of old Thou hast led our Fathers, and standest, even this day, at our right hand to lead us in the paths of life. The covenant is with us, as it was with them. Thy law is the light to guide us, and to do Thy will is our delight. Trusting in Thy infinite mercy, our fathers suffered trials and misfortunes, to be the priestly people, and to teach all men Thy law of justice and righteousness. Fully conscious of our appointment, we promise to fulfill Thy divine purposes, so that we may, with our last breath, confidently exclaim: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."

The Rabbi laid his hands on the head of each of the confirmants, pronounced a few words which the hubbub of the congregation made inaudible, and led the boys and girls slowly down the platform, amid the pleased glances and other expressions of gladness of all present.

Lustig was too preoccupied in disentangling himself and his boys from the crowd that encumbered the doorways to answer

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immediately their questions: and then many men recognized Lustig and insisted on shaking hands and learning the names of his sons.

The immense congregation seemed reluctant to leave the synagogue. For some time people clustered about the building. Every one had some friend to greet or some proud parent to congratulate. Lured by the unusual scene, many of the city's idlers gathered on the opposite of the street to watch the outcoming and vivacious assemblages. Truck drivers, messenger boys, merchants and the busy population of St. Paul street stood about, as the people drifted slowly homeward. Here and there, some boys, smartly dressed, darted in and out of the crowd, and finally the ranks thinned. The last carriage had driven up to the curb stone; and the only man left about the building was the bustling sexton, Alex. Blumendale, who, in his silk hat and with bulky frame, was forcibly closing the huge Temple gates.

The dinner in the palm garden of Brunswick Hotel did not afford the boys as much amusement as Lustig had anticipated. The Hungarian band, and the neat tables and white chairs, did not appeal to them as much as they did to Lustig, who had refused several invitations to dine there. It was not until they were on their way to Dora's that they referred to the confirmation. "Her papa and I were classmates," Lustig was explaining, in answer to countless questions. "Zelig and I came over together in the same ship, and we both started peddling together."

"Were you confirmed?" Ludwig asked with interest.

"Well, we were Bar-mitzvah—that's about the same thing. But we did things differently in the old country. The day after I was Bar-mitzvah my father said: 'Herman, tomorrow you go to Solomon's and learn tailoring;' and the day after Zelig was Bar-mitzvah his father took him to Harris Jacobs and had him

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learn shoemaking. That was our Bar-mitzvah reception. You, boys, don't know how easy you have it here in America."

"Didn't you keep chickens and make a circus?" Gottlieb queried.

"Ho, ho, Lustig laughed, "we had to earn our living. We had no time to enjoy ourselves, as you boys do here. It was work or starve. Once in a while we had a little fun. One day, Zelig made a wagon from an old box he found in the streets; and, when his mother saw it, she sent the two of us to the street fair in Posen, to haul home a bushel of potatoes in the wagon. So, we two chaps went to Posen, got the potatoes, and started home. When we were on the highway, Zelig said: 'Hyman, lets' go to America now.' "

"To America," I cried, "how can we? We haven't any money."

"Oh, we have this cart and some potatoes. If we walk far enough, we will reach America. See, it's way over there," and he pointed westward."

"What will you do when you reach the ocean?" I asked him, laughing.

"Well, boys, I had struck the fellow dead, he couldn't have turned paler. He just fell down on the ground, and began to cry. I laughed, and let him cry. 'Ho, ho' I said, 'want to go to America in a cart, eh, and cross the ocean in it and get wet?' "

"He didn't cry long. Suddenly he jumped to his feet. 'I'll tell you what we'll do!' he cried, excitedly, 'we will go around the other way, and come in at the back door. Will you do that, 'Hyman?' "

"Did you go?" they asked.

"Yes, yes," Lustig replied, amused at their confusion. We came over together in somebody else's cart, and began peddling as every poor man did in those days. Zelig settled in Rochester, and I went to Canaway. After a while he married—well, it's a

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long story. First he died and then his wife; and now the children are orphans—that's why Dora cried—her papa and mama are both dead."

"What do children do whose parents are dead?" Gottlieb asked.

"We take care of them," Lustig said sadly. "We don't want anyone to suffer. We want them to grow up to be brave and strong, to be men and women and to do their duty. That's all we Jews want people to do. Suppose," he added slowly, lowering his voice, "suppose we take Dora home with us."

"Will she make molasses candy for us like Minne Ashley?" Gottlieb asked.

"Charlie Ashley has a big sister," Ludwig broke in, taking the hint from Gottlieb's question.

The boys were eager to meet her. All the way to Philip Beer's, where she was receiving, Lustig continued to talk about her and her father. Either her popularity or the pathos of her orphanage made her the most sought after of the confirmants of this day. When the Lustigs were ushered into the spacious parlor, they added another group to the crowd that clustered about with greetings for the young girl, who returned smiling thanks for all their compliments. For a time they stood unnoticed, the boys too embarrassed to move, and Lustig viewing with smiling approval the attention bestowed upon her. But the crowd broke, Dora sighted Lustig and flew toward him, flinging her arms about him, bursting into tears, while the many friends and visitors bowed in respectful recognition of her feelings.

"Well, your Zelig's daughter, that's why I came," Lustig said to her, "and if I can no longer serve him, I can serve you."

His apt speech was followed by a signal to lead the boys into the dining-room, where, amid a throng of other children, they were served with ice-cream and such delicious ice-cream it was. No

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one in Canaway ever tasted ice-cream so sweet and delicious. And the bananas and oranges and grapes and cakes! The lady who attended to the ravenous appetites of the young folks saw to it that every plate was abundantly supplied; and when the youthful Lustigs had their full, and edged their way into the parlor, they found their father engrossed in conversation with a large, broad-shouldered man, whose iron-gray hair fell in thick folds over a high, broad forehead.

"Are these your sons?" he asked raising his shaggy brows.

"Pleased to meet you, young gentlemen," he said, formally shaking each one by the hand. "Did your father tell you that Levi Lewisohn is a Schwersenzen? And turning to Dora, who had flitted into the room, he said: 'I came all the way from New York to be here at your confirmation. Your father, Lustig here, and myself were Bar-mitzvah about the same time and then we scattered over the face of the earth. This man, Lustig, do you know, I haven't seen him since I left Schwersenz.'"

"Do you remember, Hyman," he turned to ask, "the time Rabbi Chronik thrashed you because you didn't learn your parasha?"

"Yes, I do! Lustig answered emphatically. But don't you remember when you took Schayah's tephillin (Phylacteries) and exchanged them for Schammes'? And when the Schammes discovered another's tephillin in his bag, he thought, the Rabbi had thoughtlessly misplaced his own, so he put Schayah's in the Rabbi's bag, and every boy in Cheder split his sides over the joke."

These recollections amused the men, especially those who had grouped themselves about Lustig and Lewisohn.

But Ludwig and Gottlieb did not appreciate the conversation and stared curiously at Dora, who presently sat down beside them to listen to the men.

"Tell me, Hyman, do you remember your Bar-mitzvah?"



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Without waiting for Lustig to answer, he began to chant his own section, in the peculiar cantillation of Polish Prussia, and then stopped abruptly, as if arrested by some recollection. "Do you know Hyman, I often recall those days. We were quite a crowd. There was Moritz Lazarus, he's a great professor in the old country then there's Zalinsky, he's an officer in our navy; why, New York's full of Schwersenz boys, all of them wealthy merchants—Adolph Rich, Jacob Harris, Mendel Lesser, Gustav Rothholtz and the great Rabbi of Temple Emanuel, his home was not far from Schwersenz. All are now in this great country."

"All but papa," Dora added mournfully.

"God's will, my dear girl," Lewisohn reminded her sympathetically. "But is your father so far away from us? I see Zelig Holtzman in your sweet face. I heard him in the beautiful prayer you recited this morning. Do you imagine, for one moment, we, Schwersenz boys, would let you suffer or want for anything? Why, we have all been spanked by one teacher and we never forgot our playmates; and then we have Jewish hearts we remember our dear ones. That's why we are Bar-mitzvah. Once Zelig was your father, and now every Schwersenz is. If you want a home—"

"Dora's going home with us," Gottlieb declared.

Lewisohn turned a sharp look on Lustig, who was pleased at his son's proud vindication. "That Schwersenz rascal," pointing at Lustig, "always gets the best of me! Once he met me in the old market place, as I was eating an apple. 'Levi,' he said 'did you ever make an apple vanish without touching it with your hands?' No, I, like a fool, stammered. 'Show me.'"

"This is what your father did," he said looking at the boys. "He took my apple, put it on the ground, lay flat down, picked up the apple with his teeth, and ran away. This time, he takes Dora away from me! Well, God bless him, anyhow!"

## CHAPTER VII.

### A COUNTRY CHEDER.

Ludwig and Gottlieb were greatly excited over the information their father imparted one June evening, when he announced with his usual persuading cheerfulness that he had arranged to have them taught Hebrew. The boys were sorely perplexed. For, of all things he had told them—and he had, as you know, narrated sundry episodes of his early days in Schwersenz, not to mention the many incidents that had happened in Canaway—he had never told them what Hebrew was.

They were, therefore, a trifle anxious; and, if the truth must be said, they did not know exactly what to make of the news. It presented to their young minds many mysteries. This is certain. Not one of the Gentile children had ever said anything about Hebrew, and so the Lustig boys were quite in the dark.

"What is Hebrew, papa?" Ludwig asked, concealing his bewilderment sufficiently to show intelligent curiosity.

"My son," Herman replied with more severity than the question warranted, "we are Jews; and Hebrew is our holy language. Every Jewish boy ought to know a little of Hebrew, in order to understand his religion. And, just as luck would have it, a Hebrew teacher has come to live in Canaway."

"What's his name?" they asked with lively interest.

"Hyman Goldstein,, D, D.. professor of music and languages."

But this they could not understand, and stared at their father with amazement, baffled by the long-sounding words.

But they soon learned. On that very afternoon the newcomer

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had stumbled into Lustig's store, made his peace with the proprietor, and ended the visit by arranging to instruct Ludwig and Gottlieb in Hebrew. So far as they were concerned, this was sufficient to fill them with either pleasure or dismay; but that the forlorn professor came to Canaway with his large family because he did not have money to take him elsewhere, and that he and his family were allowed the use of an abandoned house on a back street where he proposed to support his family by the precarious method of teaching music and language to unappreciative townsfolk—these grim facts and the pitiful struggles of this unfortunate man, Lustig did not relate to his sons. They would not have realized their pathos. The professor himself interested the boys more than his untoward circumstances. After answering many inquiries, Lustig proceeded to describe the teacher.

"Oh, I know him," Ludwig interrupted with animation.

"He wears a stovepipe, and all of the boys threw stones at him."

"You must not throw stones at him," Lustig commanded them.

"He's a learned man; you must respect a learned man."

"The boys chased him all the way down Coy street," Ludwig continued excitedly.

"And every one yelled after him," Gottlieb broke in, 'Say Mister, where did you get that hat?' Yes, they did papa. I heard them."

His high hat was indeed conspicuous in spite of its shabbiness; and the urchins of Canaway could not help noticing it. In fact it was the third of its kind to appear in town. One was worn by the manager of Barnum's circus, another by a country physician of Reed's Corners, a third by Hyman Goldstein, D. D., professor of music and language.

"Why does he wear that long coat?" Ludwig asked, after he had exhausted all available information bearing on the significance of the hat.

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"His Prince Albert you mean," Lustig observed. "Oh, that's fashionable. All professors wear long coats to make them look smart."

"He's got such big whiskers," Gottlieb cried out, "and he is so odd." Lustig tried to contain himself in defending the unusual appearance of the newcomer, which does not imply that the professor was uncanny or unsightly, but that the innocent people of Canaway had seldom rested their eyes on one so distinguished as a professor of music and languages. After skillfully defending his client, Lustig succeeded in awakening in his sons a proper regard for the man, as well as a desire to receive instruction from him. Such glowing accounts did Lustig give of his accomplishments, that the instruction they were to receive on the following afternoon promised to be one of the greatest events of their lives.

Early next morning both boys were on the street telling all their playmates what they had in store.

"We are going to take Hebrew lessons of Professor Hyman Goldstein," dee, dee, they said proudly. "Only smart people study Hebrew."

"Humph, that's nothing." Charlie Ashley returned unimpressed by what the lads told him so innocently. "My sister, she's in the normal school at Genesee. She takes botany and hydrogen, and she is awfully smarter."

"Well, Hebrew is the holy language, that's what my papa says and only Jews study it. We are going to take religion." Ludwig added promptly.

But Charlie was not affected by even this additional reminder. "That's nothing," he related blandly. "I study catechism in church. Reverend Lee, he teaches that, and he's smart, too."

But the Lustigs boy did not know nor care what all this meant; and thus, having driven themselves into unknown realms, they

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abruptly changed the subject by referring to things of greater moment to them.

"Say, Ludie," Charlie drawled, "have you seen my dove eggs?"

The three repaired instantly to the dovecote that Charlie had built in the back yard of dry goods boxes given by Mr. Lustig, and instantly forgot every other matter while inspecting the wonderfully made little white eggs. For some time they glowed over them, and then, having commented to the full extent of their knowledge, the three young hopefuls sauntered down Bristol street to see what the Mutchler boys were doing.

It was cherry season, and the Mutchler offsprings were found picking Mrs. Blodgett's sour cherries, an employment in which the three new arrivals soon busied themselves with such diligence and interest, that the dove eggs and Hebrew lessons were for the time overlooked.

But this is certain; every boy who lived in Bristol knew before he ate his dinner that day that Ludwig and Gottlieb were going to take Hebrew lessons of the stranger in Coy street; and furthermore, that odd undersized individual, who had shot out of space and landed in Canaway, was none other than a wonderfully learned man, who taught music and languages and many mysterious things.

The children's guileless and inexpensive advertising explained many an incident which the professor experienced during his brief, but bustling career in Canaway. It accounted in particular for the cohort of youngsters that surrounded the rural Beth-Hamid-rash on the afternoon when Gottlieb and Ludwig, attired in the new sailor suits their father brought from Rochester, wandered over to Coy street on the most solemn and awe-inspiring journey of their young lives. Every boy on Bristol and the adjoining streets accompanied them. Each was anxious to see a Hebrew teacher. Had they other motives such were not patent. Even so, they

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intended to introduce themselves by the favorite method, which country lads have of making the acquaintance of as stranger, that is to play some deviltry. A mutual interest, which often continues through a lifetime, may thus be compacted.

In this instance, however, the Canaway boys were moved by higher impulses. They were at least as eager as the Lustigs were to see what species of a man or beast a Hebrew teacher was.

And, it is fair to say that the meeting was as great an event for the professor's family as it was for the lads. For when Ludwig and Gottlieb, with steps slow and heavy, walked into the yard, they found the professor's family awaiting them. The teacher himself in a solemn black but shabby Prince Albert coat, graciously received them at the door as befits a professor of Hebrew; and then introduced them to his shrivelled wife, who cast servile and sad smiles on them as they marched through the narrow, uncarpeted hall way, passing en route a retinue of girls and boys, each of whom was scantily clad and looked thin and hungry.

The coming seemed to have been formally planned. And how could any one help finding the spot? Every boy in Canaway knew this old, green, brick house. Tradition reported, with self-evident falsity, that it was built in the days of Noah. But ever since the discovery of America it had been uninhabited because, so the boys said, the house was haunted. Though it was not haunted, almost every window pane in it was broken, every blind off one or other of its hinges, and every brick loose in the chimney. But when this rejected and dejected dwelling was invested with scholastic dignity and converted into a studio, as well as a school of languages, all Canaway must needs celebrate the, at least partial, rehabilitation of this old and somewhat dilapidated dwelling. This was a new epoch in the history of the town. When, in addition, the old green, brick house was decorated with a weather worn sign, bearing the singular legend, "Professor Hyman Gold-

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stein, D. D., professor of music and languages," the Canaway boys felt it their duty to use the sign as a target. For what other purpose were old signs for?

Long after the Lustigs lads had lost themselves in the cavernous interior the cohort of youngsters had not departed. Some hung around the building; others threw themselves on the uncut grass of the front yard; others began the time-honored practice of throwing stones at the sign; and then, every little while, the more impatient ones cried out; "Ludie, oh, Ludie, come on! We're goin' swimmin'!"

'Tis well that the timorous Lustigs heard merely the faint echoes of the voices of their comrades. It speaks well for their self-control that they fastened their attention on the peculiar presence of their teacher, who had escorted them to the front room which was to be their seat of learning. And it revealed a fine sense of propriety that they gazed steadily at him instead of looking at the boxes and bags of unpacked furniture, and open bags and boxes of peanuts, oranges and other Italian commodities deposited carelessly around the uncarpeted room. Fright, more than curiosity may have impelled them to attend to their instructor. He had planted himself squarely before them; and ere they had found a comfortable position on the hard wooden chair, he began to lecture about the majesty of all languages, with peculiar reference to Hebrew.

He was a rapid speaker, making use of words they had never heard. But suddenly he interrupted himself. Staring at their bashful, half-frightened faces, he asked curiously: "Boys, are you twins?"

"No", Ludwig answered shyly. "We are Jews."

"Yah, yah, I know!" the professor snapped irritably. "Are you twins?"

"I am the youngest," Gottlieb ventured.

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"You are a hacham!" the professor exclaimed, patting his head. "Now my dear youths, we begin the study of our mother tongue. Hebrew is the guardian of our holy scriptures. The angels discourse in Hebrew. The cherubim whisper their divine syllables in it. Ah, my children, when your tongues are touched by fire, the exclamations of your soul are proclaimed in Hebrew. We now begin the study of all subordinate languages. As we begin French, Latin, Greek, as we begin violin or piano instruction, so we begin Hebrew with the alphabet, known among the lexicographers as the aleph-beth."

The A, B, C?" Gottlieb suggested, encouraged by his former success. "We study it in school."

"Good; the professor cried, patting him again on the head. "You are a wise lad. Study my son, and learn. Some day you will be a signor."

Ludwig turned a bewildered eye on his younger brother, who seemed to have won the Professor's favor suddenly and with astonishing ease, and thereafter deferred all questions to Gottlieb.

"Well, now," began the professor, "say after me: Aleph a, a."

"Aleph, a, a; aleph, beth, gimmel; gimmel, dalet, hey," sang the professor of music and languages.

They imitated his intonation.

Their intonation was exact, and received instant approval.

"Ah," Professor Goldstein exclaimed gleefully, "now both of you are instructible."

Whirling around, he snatched an open primer from a box and handed it to Gottlieb. Both boys laid hold of the covers and held the book firmly as the professor, pointing to each letter, pronounces it and had them repeat it after him in his sing-song style. With singular adaptability they mastered the pronunciation, and had learned the name and form of the camel shaped lamed, when, with sudden violence, a broadside of pebbles hit the closed shutters.



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The professor jumped to the window.

"Such loafers," he fumed savagely. "Wait I will reprimand them for their torments? I will communicate with the police. Such imbecilities!"

But the Lustigs smothered their laughter and were reading along the bottom of the page where the lonesome shin and sin are located, when the drawling tones of Charlie Ashley came through the window:

"Ludie, oh, Ludie! Come on! We're goin' swimmin'!"

"Achl!" the professor ejaculated, scowling, that's the boy! Does the boy cogitate on the holy languages? No. The boy never touches his heartstrings with divine speech. Do not think about them. When we have completed our instruction I will give you a momentum."

The boys looked wistfully at an open bag of peanuts and oranges. The professor noted the direction of their gaze and smiled.

"Yes, yes that too," he said hurriedly, pointing to the fruit, "but something better than all things material. Indulge me, I will read you some poetry. Youths, do you know I am a poet? Furthermore, have you ever lisped poetry?"

He turned to Gottlieb who had heretofore answered all questions promptly and in a satisfactory manner. But the unhappy boy knew not whereof the professor spoke and hung his head in dejection.

"Ah, poetry is the chant of the celestials," the professor explained with melting sympathy; and full of anticipated pleasures, he suddenly darted from the room and as suddenly returned, his face wreathed in smiles and his eyes beaming. Holding a mass of wrapping paper in his trembling hands he, began to sway his body, and as he swayed, he intoned musically, as if he were rendering an anthem, these lines:

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"The night is dark, and not a star  
Doth shine in all the empty space;  
I am a stranger and alone,  
A dethroned prince of a homeless race."

"Isn't that fine?" he said, enthusiastically, kissing the tips of his fingers. But the boys stared at him vaguely, much amazed to see tears streaming down his face, as he continued to murmur the remaining verses.

"Listen to this!" he said after a pause. And having selected another poem for recitation, he tossed his head back, as if he were about to sing and began:

"Count not my tears, O Lord, my God;  
With tears I pray to thee;  
My tears have knit a ladder  
Whereon I climb to thee."

Copious tears filled his eyes at the conclusion of this verse, and he was unable to continue either reciting the subsequent stanzas, of which there were many, or to resume the instruction. The tears welled from his eyes, flowing down the grooves of his face and melting in the thick meshes of his beard.

"Are they not divine, boys?" he asked, kissing the tips of his fingers.

"Ah," he sighed languidly, "a sweet singer of Israel left perishing in a foreign land! Shield of David redeem me!, Harken to this youths!"

Tears were gathering in the boy's eyes, but the professor did not see them. Shuffling the scrappy pieces of paper hurriedly, he selected the desired poem, and then read slowly:

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"How burdened are we sons of men,  
Where'er our steps are lead;  
There is no peace for that poor soul  
Who daily begs his bread.

The sheep or cattle in the field,  
Or dogs of a city's street:  
They find their food—a whitened bone—  
Beneath their idle feet;

But man, God's child, he hungry goes,  
And starves for a crust of bread,  
And all the joys my poor soul knows  
Is buried with the dead."

Because the professor was in tears, the boys thought they ought to weep too, and they did.

"Boys, boys," he said sorrowfully, "you will never comprehend my position. Never. never! God spare you that catastrophe. But my own poor children, how they must suffer on my account.

He was indeed overcome. Burying his head in his hands, he wept with a sad disconsolate wail, heart-rending and gruesome. His sobbing now still further affected Ludwig and Gottlieb, and so loud did they cry that their lamentations attracted the professors notice. Realizing the futility of provoking needless tears, he composed himself, brushed his own tears aside and, resting his hands gently on his scholars head's spoke softly to them.

"Gentle, my lads," he said, methought in America all Jews hard-hearted and stiffnecked. In country towns, alas! methought the Jew turned goy, No, no! The Jewish heart is ever moved by distress. God made it so. See, even you princes of fortune, you feel for your teacher. I espy that in you. So now let us continue our tutorization."

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He pointed to the open primer and sang:

"Aleph, a, a; aleph, beth, gimmel; gimmel, daleth, hey; hey, vay, zayin."

So the lesson continued to the end of the hour.

Not one of their companions was waiting for them when the Lustig boys emerged from the house, each sucking an immense juicy orange. Devouring the succulent fruit, they sauntered down Coy street, into Bristol street, toward their home beyond Sucker Brook.

When Herman Lustig returned at supper time from his store, he called the youngsters from the backyard, where they were digging a cave.

"Well, boys, how did it go? What did you do?" he asked.

"He threw kisses at us, and we cried." Gottlieb answered immediately.

"Didn't you learn your aleph, beth?"

"Aleph, a, a; aleph, beth, gimmel; gimmel' daleth, hey," they sang, repeating the professors' intonations.

"Is that as far as you got?"

"No, no; we shall know all of the alphabet," Ludwig said proudly, and thereupon both convinced their father that the hour under the professors' instruction was profitably spent by reciting fluently the entire Hebrew alphabet.

"Ah," Lustig said with evident pleasure, that's fine. I give each of you five cents because you have learned it so well."

"Give my money to the professor," Ludwig said. "He's poor."

"Mine too, papa," Gottlieb echoed warmly. "He's hungry. He said he was and that dogs ate bones and he couldn't—yes he did. And he likes me."

Recounting the incidents of their lesson was the chief diversion of the evening; and Lustig listened intently to all



PROFESSOR GOLDSTEIN

"Aleph, a, a, aleph, beth, gimmel, gimmel, daleth, hey"



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they had to say along these lines, on this and many subsequent evenings of the summer vacation. The boys continued their lessons regularly and faithfully during July and the first week in August, when the long expected Barnum circus came to town.

A circus is the annual carnival of a country town. Before sunrise the youths of the place are astir. In Canaway, as in most of such places, attention hangs on the event. Many a boy remains awake all night in order to be up in time to see the circus train come in and unload. Of great importance to all is such a show in Canaway. But with the advent of Barnum's circus, the brilliant career of the professor came to an untimely end.

In defense of Barnum's let it be known that on its account the worthy professor did not leave Canaway. But on circus day he became convinced that the place did not appreciate his imposing citizenship, for then culminated the series of torments to which he had been subjected by the younger generation of his townfolk.

Ludwig and Gottlieb were unaware of the many pranks played on the professor by the ingenuous youths of Bristol street. They were obviously too young either to engage in the many midnight prowls or to play "hunt the grey." The big boys, those who wore long trousers, could endure the strain of that game, and then only the older boys were sufficiently skillful to attach undetected a tick-tack to some one's window. On Saturday night only, the Lustig lads were permitted to go down town after dark.

So it came to pass that they never heard of the frequency with which the professor reported these annoyances to Hiram Doolittle, the town constable (there was no policeman in Canaway; policemen were invented for cities;) nor of the many times the professor had harangued the youngsters on the front lawn, long after the town clock had tolled the curfew.

Had the Lustigs engaged in any of these dare-devilties, they

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would have understood what Charlie Ashley, the Mutchler boys or Will Andrews meant, when they asked where the professor kept his "stove-pipe" The Lustigs did not indeed know in what part of the studio or boudoir the professor bestowed his headgear. Nor did they understand that the boys were hinting when they asked them if they ever heard the professor lecture. These veiled references were lost on them, although they confessed they had been lectured. With familiarity came indifference. Frequently their teacher reproved them for carelessness. But never had they heard him lecture the village boys. It had not been their fortune to hear him shriek:

"Wait! I communicate your imbecilities to the police—loafers!"

The Lustigs had never been a party of the chorus of the youngsters who verbally repeated his threat, and then added with rural disdain:

"Ah, come off!"

"Insolence!" the professor would yell back, "know you not that I am a teacher? Have you no respect for learning, you ignoramuses? Am I so distinguished that you maltreat my repose, and annihilate the tranquility of my family!"

Hyman Goldstein, D. D., professor of music and languages, was not the first nor the last to hear the derisive laughter of the gentiles. But the town boys were not maliciously inclined. They were playful, and the impressive professor afforded them one of a very few sources of amusement.

Wherever he went he was sure to have a following. And as domestic exigencies compelled him to move about frequently, with his baskets of fruit, he was constantly driven to desperate straits.

On circus day the battle ended. Within a few months he had succeeded in making himself one of the best known characters in Canaway. His whiskers and his stove-pipe had singled him out on



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the street; and his retorts to the boys were quoted in all parts of the town. Besides his poems in the village paper popularized him jocularly with the literary people and the lawyers. Canaway had never had a real poet, nor had it ever bought fruit and garden truck from one who wore a stove-pipe hat. Whatever it was that moved his townsfolk to patronize him, he did a thrifty vegetable business for a time; but it did not last long; for the boys practically drove him away.

The Professor was alive to the profitable advantage that a fruit stand would be on circus day. With a discerning eye he had pitched his tent near the depot. Over some clothes poles he spread a bed sheet, beneath which on the dry goods boxes which Lustig gave him he piled small mountains of oranges and peanuts, while into a big wash-tub he poured gallons of diluted lemonade. Appointing his older son and daughter to stand guard behind the counter, he stationed himself without the shadow of his tent, calling aloud to everyone:

"Lemonade! lemonade! Peanuts and oranges!"

It may have been the rest of his attire, but it was particularly the hat that attracted the rustics. They had never seen anyone so arrayed. It appeared to them a part of the circus attraction to look at a small, coatless fellow, wearing a high silk hat that slightly sheltered a strong but sad face, and who was eyeing intently the passersby and chanting to them persuadingly, in tones that remotely resembled a melody:

"Peanuts and oranges! Lemonade and candies!  
Lemonade, ladies! Lemonade and candy!"

The throng on the street thickened. From the surrounding towns and the rural districts streamed into Canaway the farmers and others. Main street was packed with people awaiting the circus parade.

The Canaway boys who had been on the circus grounds

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since dawn and had witnessed the bustling method of pitching the tents, were now drifting back to town to watch the procession from the crowded curbstone on Main street. But the more restless ones circulated among the crowd, and in good time a detachment of Canaway's choice spirits, the Bristol street gang, discovered the professor's tent.

"Hello, Professor Deedeel!" they yelled, familiarly. The constant mention by the Lustig boys of Goldstein's theological title provided the rest with the needed nickname, which all town boys invent to honor each of their favorites.

Their greeting was righteously ignored.

"Peanuts and lemonade! Oranges and candies!" sang the professor.

"Peanuts and lemonade!" the boys shouted, imitating his tones.

"Lemonade! Lemonade!" sang the professor, unheedingly.

"Lemonade, made in the shade with a spade by the aid of an old maid," one urchin shouted; while his companions in a semi-circle, closing in on the booth or tent, took up the strain instantly, adding to and improving it so that the professor heard a saucy lot of lusty throats cry out:

"Lemonade, made with a spade in the shade, by an old maid."

Goldstein's patience was tried. The idle throng, amused by the humorous and somewhat musical wrangle began to enclose them. When the Lustigs, who, like other town boys, feel the superiority of the local resident, found themselves at the end of their wanderings at the railroad station, they overheard the familiar voice of the professor exclaiming excitedly:

"Imbeciles, begone with you! Loafers, vagabonds! hie away! You are injuring my business. Begone with you, hoodlums."

Angered by the persistent disobedience of his tormentors, he darted toward the bolder with a threatening gesture, and they

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instantly retaliated by coming nearer to his tent, and shaking the unsteady tent poles and pretending to grab some of the fruit. The sales stopped, for the crowd was more interested in the scrimmage than the wares.

Ludwig and Gottlieb looked on with fear, blanched by the possibilities of the situation. The agonized appeal of their teacher aroused their sympathy and moved them to tears.

"Pity me, my good friends," he cried to the gawking crowd. "I am a poor man. Don't you see you are taking the bread from my mouth?"

The crowd was unmoved, however, and a country bully, inflamed, perhaps, by the hard cider and impelled by mischief, pushed some one against the stand, upsetting the fruit and lemonade and wrecking the tent. Oranges rolled over the ground, while the lemonade made its own rivulets, wetting the place underfoot and forming many pools.

The catastrophe paralyzed the professor. For a moment he stood without motion or speech, and then winding his arms about his crying sons and daughters, who had crept out from under the ruins of the booth, he himself burst into tears and wailing, but suppressed his own feelings presently, in order to soothe his son and daughter.

His grief softened the heart of the mob. Many a rustic who had stared open-mouthed and dully at him now set about to pick up the fruit and restore the tent. But all the while a silence was over them, and few ventured to move, none to pilfer the fruit. The crowd merely stood and gawked. Then a broadshouldered red-faced man pushed his way through and facing the crowd and shaking his fist at them, said in his country drawl:

"See here! The fellers that's done this 'er thing's goin' to pay for it and I know who it is. Any fellow what moves from here before he settles up, that feller's goin' to wrastle me!"

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He threw off his coat and flung it to his wife, who carrying a baby on one arm, tried to restrain her husband with the other.

Ludwig and Gottlieb did not wait the outcome. They ran to their father's store, attracting attention by their loud cries and causing everyone they met to ask them what had happened.

Lustig's Rochester Clothing Store was crowded when the boys came in, sobbing and rubbing the tears from their eyes.

"What's this?" Lustig demanded, sharply, leaving his customer.

"The boys wanted to kill our Hebrew teacher Ludwig blubbered.

But the professor was fully repaid and all damages repaired. When the gorgeous band-wagon that leads the parade loomed into view on lower Main street, he had his tent restored, his oranges replaced, and the lemonade renewed in another and better vessel. He was plying to a thrifty trade. His sympathizers had increased apace, and his fruit was sold out again and again.

But the accident did not alter his intention. "I leave this hamlet," he confided to Ludwig and Gottlieb the following day. I have just been appointed Chief Rabbi of the Rhine Street Ahavas Israel in Rochester, and I must obey the summons. This is my vocation; and now at last fortune destines me to better ends. I need it; God knows I need it!"

He sighed and blew his nose vigorously in his large red and white bandana handkerchief, and then he shook each boy by the hand.

"Hearken, lads. I am proud to have met you country youths. Ludwig and Gottlieb Lustig, always be proud of your Jewish heritage, and some day, perhaps, you will read all of my poems in one immense publication like Shakespere. Some day the sweet singer of David will be famous, and you will remember your teacher, nicht whar?"

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Then he blessed them, gave each an orange and a bag of peanuts, and sent them on their way. This was the last they saw of Hyman Goldstein, D. D., professor of music and languages.

## POSTSCRIPT.

Now that you have read what has been related about the Lustig boys, what they did on the Jewish holidays, how their father spent his childhood in Schwersenz, how they learned a little of Hebrew from that funny man, Hyman Goldstein, D., D., professor of music and languages; how pretty the rural village of Canaway is and how charming the lake, you, my dear little readers, may like to hear what became of the Lustigs. And if I were near you would ask me what became of them, just as Ludwig and Gottlieb used to ask their father concerning anything they wanted to know.

They did not always remain in Canaway; and somehow this seems to be a sad confession, which for truth's sake it is necessary to make, for in the country and in country villages life is simpler and more even than in cities, and men and women are healthier and happier when they get the pure breath of the fields and woodlands than they are when they live in the close, narrow city streets and in the houses that have, so to speak, no elbow room. The Lustigs moved away from Canaway to the city which they had often visited with unfeigned delight. They went to Rochester.

Ludwig was thirteen years old and Gottlieb eleven and five months when their father sold his Canaway clothing store. He sold, so he said because he had a good chance to go into a bigger business in Rochester. Having lived in Canaway seventeen years lacking three weeks, he took it into his head that that was

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long enough to stay in one small corner of the world, and he decided that he would go to a larger town and spend the remainder of his days there. He felt sure that in such a place there would be more frequent and better opportunities to improve the condition of his family. Besides, he desired the advantage of Jewish society—to give the boys the companionship of Jewish children and a wider field in which to expand, to grow up in and become notable persons. His intention he made known to his sons. He was not unselfish in his ambitions. He wished to be a whole sale dealer in clothing and the principal in a large establishment. He felt that he would then be of importance in the business world: and every man whether he will confess it or not, likes to feel at least once in a while his own importance.

Lustig saw that he could never cut much of a figure among merchants if he were to stay in Canaway. Some of his distant relatives had remained in cities and were now proprietors of large clothing houses, doing business only at wholesale. They had distanced him in the race for wealth and he was a little piqued that they had forged ahead while he was trifling his time in the retail trade.

In those Canaway days when he went to Rochester with the boys and was walking with them through the streets he would say:

"Some day we will live in this city."

And Ludwig would answer: "Oh, papa, how old will we be then?"

The matter of their ages did not interest Gottlieb. He had another question more important to him than that. "What will we do, papa?" he asked.

But Lustig would smile at both of these questions and tell his sons the many ways they would have of amusing themselves in the city: how they would go to dancing school, to parties on

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Chanukkah, attend the Sunday school picnics and go to the theaters on Saturday afternoons with their mother.

He said this and many more things of the sort to awaken or stimulate their interest in the prospects he entertained of some day living in the city. He did not wish the boys to feel satisfied with an easy life, such as Canaway afforded them. He wanted them to imbibe the American restlessness which comes from the desire of every American boy or girl to better their condition. He believed that to be satisfied with one's lot meant stagnation, and all stagnant things or persons are useless. He wanted his boys to be enterprising, and so, useful. That was the leading trait in his character and he wished to impart it to his sons.

His idea was, and it was a very good idea, that while a man is alive he should be very much alive.

It was a long time, however, before Lustig could see his way clear to take the hazardous step of giving up his business in Canaway and moving to Rochester. The opportunity finally came to sell out and he resolved to embrace it. But he had already put off the fulfillment of his promise to the boys that some day they would live in Rochester, until they had lost faith in it and thought the day would never come. Nevertheless, the older Lustig grew the more anxious he was to live in the city.

One summer he made more than the usual number of trips to Rochester, and on a night in June, when he had that afternoon returned from the city he called his sons to his side and said to them:

"Well, my sons, at last we are going to move to Rochester."

"When?" inquired Ludwig, evidently still in doubt.

"As soon as we can pack up. I have sold my business here and have been taken into partnership with a firm of clothiers in Rochester."

"Hurrah! Hurrah!" the boys exclaimed gleefully.

But their father was not yet prepared to enter into their mood.



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He alone realized the responsibilities, the daring, the uncertainty of the transition. He looked careworn and troubled. When we have sought out the object and aim which we have been longing and striving for year after year we see that it is not all our anticipations painted it, and, instead of being elated, we are dejected. The thing itself is so different from what we thought it would be.

The boys seeing their father so strangely gloomy, so quiet and abstracted and with apparently nothing further to say about their moving to the city, left him and ran out of doors to let their playfellows hear the startling news. In a little while every lad on Bristol street, and shortly after that everybody in Canaway, knew that the Lustigs had sold out and were going to move to Rochester. In the Lustig household weeks of activity followed. All the furniture was packed and crated, and the boys were sent from neighbor to neighbor for a night's lodging, as the exigencies of the case required. However, one Sunday evening, after a week in which all the household goods had been loaded on a freight car, Lustig told his family that this would be their last Sunday in Canaway. He had already begun active business in Rochester, and he had stayed in the city six days a week, returning to his home only for the seventh day.

The boys, of course, were happier than their father. Since he went to the city and entered business there he had not been very light-hearted, but as this Sunday was the last that he and his family would live in Canaway, he proposed to celebrate the day, and in this manner—to take a long carriage ride around the town.

They drove all that afternoon, seeing familiar scenes, visiting old friends and saying good-bye to them. Herman Lustig himself was very sober, and Mrs. Lustig, as she parted with her neighbors, was often in tears, but the boys laughed nearly all the time and waited with impatience the dawning of the morrow. Perhaps they were not particularly interested in visiting for the last time the

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many familiar places which have been described in this book—but Herman Lustig was. The lake dimpled, and seemed as if it were grieved; the hills frowned disapproval of the family's departure; and over the town hovered a soft cloud of early summer. Here, in the place where Herman Lustig had begun his business career, would ever dwell tender associations of his life in America. But the town was soon to be to him scarcely more than a shadow.

On Monday morning he and his family left. The Elmira Express rolled into the depot at eight-forty, and five minutes later carried them away. They caught a swift glimpse of lower Main street and the lake and as the train swung around the bend back of the town hall, they passed the burial ground and brewery and the hills, rolling off to the west, golden with the sunlight of their changeful day, Canaway was for them little more than a dream.

What they did in Rochester is not of interest to us at present, nor is it of immediate concern. We have lived with the Lustigs in Canaway; and now that they have parted with that pretty place, let us part with them, too.

But this I feel obliged to say—that often the boys in later life revisited their native town. They recalled their experiences there, and their thoughts flew back to the place with affection and with the yearning we all must feel for the days that are no more.





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